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Thomas F. Torrance

PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY

"TOO SWIFT ARRIVES TOO TARDY AS TOO SLOW."

—*Shakespeare.*

SCS #1567

HISTORY

OF THE

PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY

BY

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WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS
EDINBURGH AND LONDON
MDCCCXCIII

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"AS THE EARTH BRINGETH FORTH HER BUD, AND AS THE GARDEN CAUSETH THE THINGS THAT ARE SOWN IN IT TO SPRING FORTH; SO THE LORD GOD WILL CAUSE RIGHTEOUSNESS AND PRAISE TO SPRING FORTH BEFORE ALL THE NATIONS."—*Isaiah.*

"DIE GESCHICHTE IST DAS WISSEN DER MENSCHHEIT VON SICH, IHRE SELBSTGEWISSHEIT. — SIE IST NICHT 'DAS LICHT UND DIE WAHRHEIT,' ABER EIN SUCHEN DANACH, EINE PREDIGT DARAUF, EINE WEIHE DAZU; DEM JOHANNES GLEICH: *οὐκ ἦν τὸ φῶς, ἀλλ' ὅτι μαρτυρήσῃ περὶ του φωτός.*"—*Droysen.*

HISTORICAL PHILOSOPHY

IN

FRANCE

AND

FRENCH BELGIUM AND SWITZERLAND

BY

ROBERT FLINT

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MDCCCXCIII

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PREFACE.

Almost twenty years ago the Author published a volume in which he endeavoured to describe and criticise the principal attempts which had been made in France and Germany philosophically to comprehend and explain the history of mankind.

Had he not been called soon afterwards to a position which required for a considerable number of years almost exclusive devotion to a different order of studies, that volume would have been followed by one dealing in a similar way with the course and succession of historical philosophies in Italy and England. But before he could resume the work, he had become so convinced of the necessity of altering and enlarging his plan, as well as of endeavouring to improve the execution, that he has allowed the volume which he had published to remain out of print for nearly a dozen years, during which it has only been known through the excellent French translation of the late M. Carrau.

He now believes himself to be able to make his work, instead of simply a connected series of studies, a real and comprehensive history; and, if life and strength be granted, to carry it on steadily, although not perhaps rapidly, to completion.

For the reasons stated in the Introduction, the Author deems it impossible to describe the course of historical philosophy in a detailed, orderly, and useful manner, otherwise than by tracing it in the first place in its national channels. He desires so to do this that his work may be not merely a history of a department of philosophy, but the history of an interesting and instructive phase of the intellectual development of four great nations—France, Germany, Italy, and England.

Believing that in few, if any, spheres of activity are national tendencies and characteristics more clearly discernible than in that of historical thought, he hopes that the present volume will be found to be to some extent a contribution to the history of France, as well as of the philosophy of history; and will equally endeavour to give to subsequent volumes not merely a general and philosophical, but likewise a special and national interest and value.

The volumes being so far relatively distinct will be published separately, although they have a common subject.

The one now issued has been a considerable time passing through the press. Hence some writers treated of in it when alive are now dead. Hence also a considerable number of books which would probably have been referred to if they had appeared earlier are unnoticed.

The best thanks of the Author are due to his learned friend, the Rev. W. Hastie, B.D., for his assistance in revising the proofs of the entire volume, and for many helpful suggestions.

Johnstone Lodge, Craigmillar Park,
Edinburgh, 20*th November* 1893.

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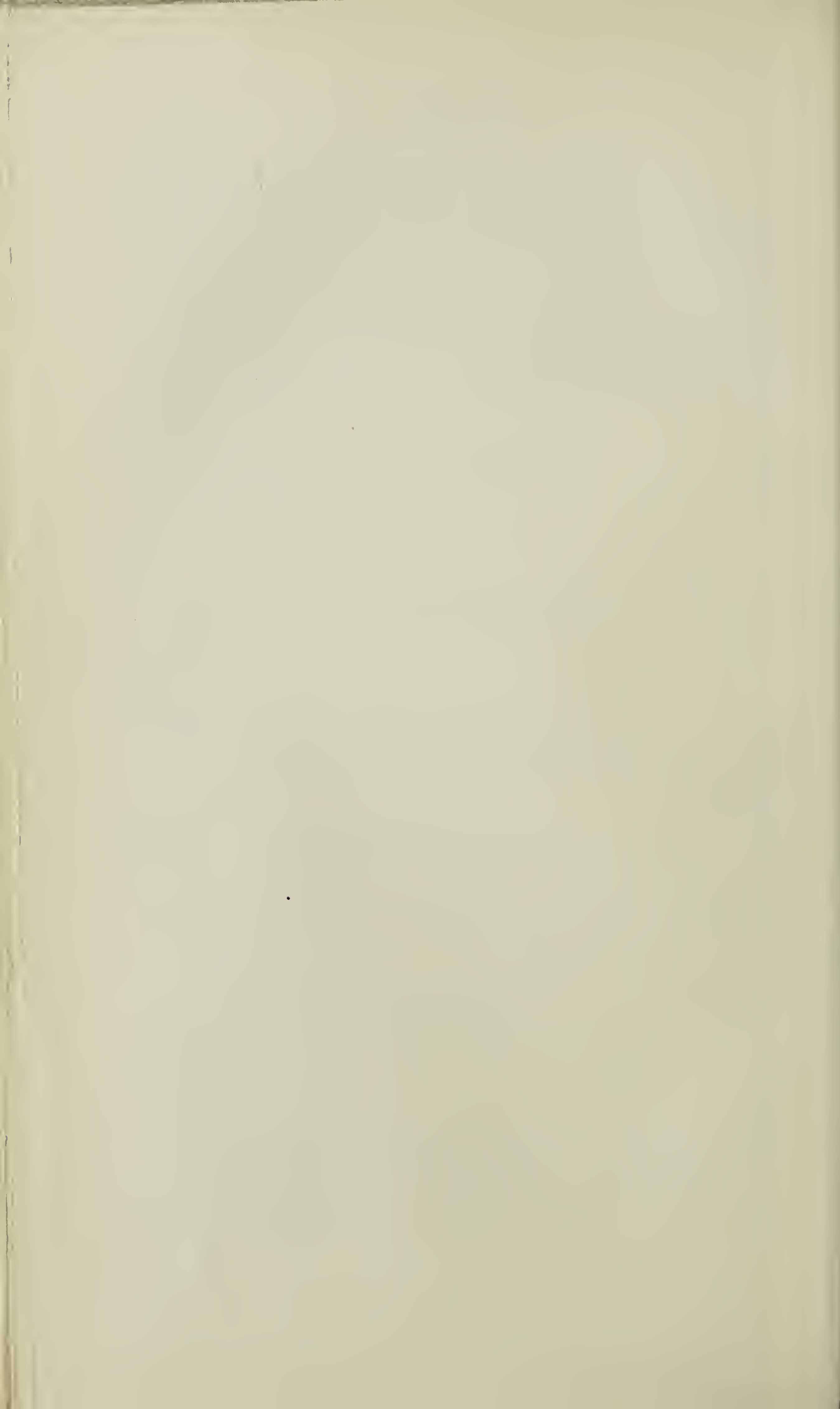

PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY.

INTRODUCTION.

I.

The aim of the present work is twofold—historical and critical. Its primary purpose is to trace the course of human thought in its endeavours to explain human history; or, in other words, to give an account of the rise and progress of reflection and speculation on the development of humanity. The task must be amply worth an effort to accomplish. At a time when all history is tending to become scientific, and almost all science is availing itself of the assistance of history; at a time also when man and society are felt as never before to be the nearest and noblest studies of mankind,—it requires but little perspicacity to foresee that thoughtful minds will soon be far more generally and earnestly engaged in seeking to attain a philosophical comprehension of history than they have ever yet been. It cannot, therefore, be inopportune to record what has already been attempted and achieved in this department of intellectual effort.

During the past century and a half a very considerable amount of thought has been applied to ascertain the course, significance, and conditions of the development of human society. There is room for great difference of opinion as to how far such thought has been wisely or successfully expended, but

there can be no reasonable doubt that the object sought to be attained by it is a legitimate and important one. The history of man as obviously demands and deserves scientific study and elucidation as the history of nature. Nothing in the world is intelligible apart from its history, and man must be of all things the least so, because he is of all things the most complex, variable, and richly endowed. The history of man is clearly a phenomenon which not only deserves to be accurately described in its external form and features, but which should be viewed in its relations to coexistent and contiguous phenomena, which should be analysed into its elements, and which should have the operation of its various factors and the laws, stages, and direction of its movement investigated. In equivalent terms, it is a phenomenon which should be philosophically and scientifically treated. For a lengthened period attempts thus to deal with it have been made in uninterrupted and rapid succession. Some of them have attracted great attention and exerted wide influence. They have of late become increasingly numerous and have gained in interest and worth. They are closely connected and manifoldly related. Hence they are now themselves proper subjects and materials for a history. They are fragments, rather than stages, of a process which is strictly historical even while essentially philosophical—the process of man's reflection on his own history. To trace this process must be similarly serviceable to the student of history as giving an account of what has been already attempted and accomplished in other disciplines—philosophy or theology, ethics or æsthetics, mathematics, mechanics, or biology—is to those who at present cultivate them. Whenever any department of knowledge or process of thought has been continuously evolved for some length of time, an historical survey of it cannot fail to be of use. It must help us to see where and why there has been failure or success in the past, and suggest rules and cautions for work in the future. In the words of Mr John Morley, "a survey of this kind shows us in a clear and definite manner the various lines of road along which thinkers have travelled, and the point to which the subject has been brought in our own time. We are able to contrast methods and to compare their fruits. People always understand their own speculative position the better, the more clearly they are

acquainted with the other positions which have been taken in the same matter."[1]

The process to be studied is one of thought and speculation. But this, as has been indicated, does not prevent its being also as strictly one of history as any external or visible process whatever. The theories of thinkers are in an obvious sense as much historical facts and realities as births and deaths, treaties and battles, the changes of dynasties and the revolutions of peoples. What men have thought about history is thus itself a section of history; and, like all that is history, it should be treated in the first and chief place simply as history; that is, should be studied solely with a view to discover precisely what it is and how it has come to be what it is. This must be steadily borne in mind throughout the present work. Our primary and main aim is to describe an historical process in a truly historical spirit and manner. No apology would be needed were no more than this attempted. The historian of ideas is no more bound to constitute himself the judge of their truth or falsity, than the historian of events is bound to pronounce on their wisdom or folly, rightness or wrongness. The sole duty of the historian, alike of ideas and events, is to give a complete history of them—such a history as will of itself imply the true judgment of them.

Such being the case, it may perhaps be thought that it would be wise not to go beyond the proper sphere of the historian, and to abstain from pronouncing on the truth or falsity, probability or improbability, of the speculations gradually unfolded. The space allotted to the criticism of theories and systems is apt to be taken from that required for their adequate presentation. Obviously, the danger of unfairness is greatly increased when the historian of opinion ventures to become its judge. The characters and functions of the historian and the critic are so different that the critic may easily, and even unduly, discredit the historian. There is much undeniable truth in this view. The risks involved in attempting to discharge the two distinct offices specified cannot be too fully recognised, and should, as a general rule, be avoided. One who undertakes, for instance, to

[1] Fortnightly Review, Sept. 1, 1874—Art. "Mr Flint's 'Philosophy of History.'"

write a history of philosophy or of theology will do well to refrain from any criticism except such as seems absolutely necessary to make apparent the course and character of the historical development itself. The histories both of philosophy and of theology are so lengthened and comprehensive that to attempt more than their delineation must be unprofitable and futile. To imagine that any service will be rendered either to philosophy or theology by such cursory criticisms as their historians can append to their expositions, must appear almost ludicrous when one considers with what keenness, and from how many points of view, the cardinal problems of philosophy and of theology have already for ages been discussed. It is otherwise, however, with a comparatively recent and comparatively limited department of knowledge, such as the philosophy or science of history. In this case the limits of the history leave room for the criticism of the theories. In this case, also, a judicious criticism of theories may reasonably be hoped to be of real and immediate service to the new discipline which is struggling into existence. And therefore, in this case the advantages attainable may warrant our attempting what is not generally advisable. But, of course, care must be taken that the historical exposition and the critical appreciation of the theories successively submitted to examination be kept clearly distinct, and that the former be never obscured or perverted in order to give relief and seeming conclusiveness to the latter.

I mean, then, not merely to pass in historical review the more famous of the many attempts which have been made within the last century and a half to discover the laws of order which regulate human affairs, but also to pronounce judgment on the truth or falsity of what is essential and characteristic in them, and to indicate their chief merits and defects. If I accomplish this twofold purpose with the slightest measure of success, the conceptions of the reader as to the character, scope, and method of the philosophy of history, as to what it ought to do and how it ought to do it, should be constantly increasing in definiteness and accuracy as the inquiry itself advances. It may be that even at its close there will still remain possibilities of misapprehension and reasons for uncertainty as to the

precise sphere and method of the philosophy of history; but the proper place to remove these, it seems to me, is not at the outset, but at the end of our historical review, when, from the vantage-ground gained by a study of the thoughts and labours of the past in this department of research, and a knowledge of its failures and successes, we may hope to get a clearer view than we could otherwise have attained of the duties of the future, of the aims which a philosophy of history may reasonably propose to itself, and of the processes to be pursued and the errors to be avoided if it would realise them.

The term *ἱστορία* meant in early Greek usage *inquiry,* or *learning by inquiry;* and hence *the knowledge so obtained, information acquired on any subject.* Only by later Greek writers—as, for example, by Polybius and Plutarch—was it employed to denote *a setting forth of the results of inquiry, a written account of information obtained, a narrative.* Among the Romans, *historia,* although often used to denote any narrative or account, any tale or story, acquired also the more definite meaning of *a narrative of past events, a record of some course of human actions.* With us the word "history," like its equivalents in all modern languages, signifies either a form of literary composition or the appropriate subject or matter of such composition —either a narrative of events, or events which may be narrated.[1] It is impossible to free the term from this doubleness and ambiguity of meaning. Nor is it, on the whole, to be desired. The advantages of having one term which may, with ordinary caution, be innocuously applied to two things so related, more than counterbalances the dangers involved in two things so distinct having the same name. The history of England which actually happened cannot easily be confounded with the history of England written by Mr Green; while by the latter being termed history as well as the former, we are

[1] "History in the objective sense is the process by which nature and spirit are developed. History in the subjective sense is the investigation and statement of this objective development. The Greek words *ἱστορία* and *ἱστορεῖν,* being derived from *εἰδέναι,* signify, not history in the objective sense, but the subjective activity involved in the investigation of facts. The German word *Geschichte* involves a reference to that which has come to pass (*das Geschehene*), and has therefore primarily the objective signification."—Ueberweg, History of Philosophy, vol. i. p. 5. As to the etymology of the term *ἱστορία,* the learned note of F. Creuzer in 'Deutsche Schriften,' Abt. iii. 137, may be consulted.

reminded that it is an attempt to reproduce or represent the course of the former. Occasionally, however, the ambiguity of the word gives rise to great confusion of thought and gross inaccuracy of speech. And this occurs most frequently, if not exclusively, just when men are trying and professing to think and speak with especial clearness and exactness regarding the signification of history—*i.e.*, when they are labouring to define it. Since the word history has two very different meanings, it obviously cannot have merely one definition. To define an order of facts and a form of literature in the same terms—to suppose that when either of them is defined the other is defined—is so absurd that one would probably not believe it could be seriously done were it not so often done. But to do so has been the rule rather than the exception. The majority of so-called definitions of history are definitions only of the records of history. They relate to history as narrated and written, not to history as evolved and acted; in other words, although given as the only definitions of history needed, they do not apply to history itself, but merely to accounts of history. They may tell us what constitutes a book of history, but they cannot tell us what the history is with which all books of history are occupied. It is, however, with history in this latter sense that a student of the science or philosophy of history is mainly concerned. History as a form of literature is a subject of primary interest only to a student of *belles-lettres.* History as it happened — the real movement of history, with its events and laws—is that with which the historical scientist or philosopher, as well as the historian himself, has directly to do; and to history in this acceptation, every definition which contains a term like *narratio, récit, Darstellung, record,* or any phrase equivalent to them, is plainly inappropriate.

If by history be meant history in its widest sense, the best definition of history as a form of literature is, perhaps, either the very old one, "the narration of events," or W. von Humboldt's, "the exhibition of what has happened" (*die Darstellung des Geschehenen*). The excellence of these definitions lies in their clear and explicit indication of what history as effectuated or transacted is. It consists of events; it is *das Geschehene.* It is the entire course of events in time. It is all

that has happened precisely as it happened. Whatever happens is history. Eternal and unchanging being has no history. Things or phenomena considered as existent, connected, and comprehended in space, compose what is called nature as distinguished from history. And history as distinguished from nature is process and movement, the coming of things and phenomena into being or into successive stages and states of being, the flow of occurrences in time. These two conceptions —nature and history—are thus extremely wide and comprehensive. They represent the universe in its two chief aspects. Obviously they are far from absolutely separable; on the contrary, they are essentially interconnected. They are only distinguishable as correlatives. Space and time are themselves related, and still more are their contents. Nature has a history, and it is a characteristic of the science of the present day to seek to explain nature historically. History is the evolution of nature, and it is also a characteristic of contemporary science to endeavour to account for history naturally. Yet while the mind is unable to regard nature and history as absolutely separate, or even as not closely and variously conjoined, it cannot fail to recognise them as relatively distinct. It is compelled by its intellectual constitution to contemplate the universe at one time predominantly in the one aspect, and at another time in the other aspect. The world, or any part of it, apprehended mainly as in space is nature, and if apprehended mainly as in time is history. It is unnecessary to labour to give more definite expression to the distinction. Probably Droysen has found a neater and terser formula for it in German than any which the English language could supply. Nature he describes as "das Nebeneinander des Seienden," and history as "das Nacheinander des Gewordenen."[1]

By distinguishing history from nature, we get the most general notion of history which can be formed. If we would understand what is meant by any kind or species of history, we must distinguish further, and give precision to our thinking by fixing on the appropriate differential characteristic. In the present work such delimitation or definition is obviously required. Mediately it may be concerned with the histories of the

[1] Grundriss der Historik, p. 7.

heavens and the earth, of plants and animals, but it is certainly not immediately concerned with them. The only kind of history with which we have here directly to deal is that kind of it to which the name is generally restricted, history *par excellence*, human history, what has happened within the sphere of human agency and interests, the actions and creations of men, events which have affected the lives and destinies of men, or which have been produced by men. This is the ordinary sense of the word history, and it is the sense in which it will ordinarily be employed in these pages. No further restriction on its signification will be imposed or implied. Indeed, all further restrictions must mislead, and all definitions which involve them are to be rejected. History is all that man has suffered, thought, and executed—the entire life of humanity—the whole movement of societies. It is history thus understood which is the subject of the art, and the science, and the philosophy of history,—of the art which recalls and delineates it, of the science which analyses it and traces its laws, and of the philosophy which exhibits it in its relations to the general system of the universe. To attempt further to define it would be worse than useless. It would be unduly to limit, and to distort and pervert, its meaning. In proof of this a few brief remarks on certain typical or celebrated definitions of history may perhaps be of service.

The definition given in the Dictionary of the French Academy —" l'histoire est le récit des choses dignes de mémoire "—is a specimen of a very numerous species. According to such definitions history consists of exceptional things, of celebrated or notorious events, of the lives and actions of great and exalted men, of conspicuous achievements in war and politics, in science and art, in religion and literature. But this is a narrow and superficial conception of history. History is made up of what is little as well as of what is great, of what is common as well as of what is strange, of what is counted mean as well as of what is counted noble. The obscure agency of the masses is more potent in forming it than the brilliant achievements of the few. Things of frequent recurrence are more important than those which are rare. A history of wages or prices is at least as instructive as a history of battles and political intrigues.

The historian has no right to despise the smallest incidents, the humblest lives; for the great is explained by the little, and the life of humanity is unfolded not merely through a few of its members but through all.

Dr Arnold's definition—"history is the biography of a society"[1]—has been often praised. Nor altogether undeservedly. For it directs attention to the fact that all history accords with biography in supposing in its subject a certain unity of life, work, and end. Unless individuals truly form a society there cannot be a history of them as a society, whether family or tribe, trade or corporation, Church or nation, but only a collection of biographies of them as individuals. It does not follow, however, that biography is a more general notion than history, and history only a species of biography. In fact, it is not only as true and intelligible to say that biography is the history of an individual as to say that history is the biography of a society, but more so. It is the word biography in the latter case which is used in a secondary and analogical sense, not the word history in the former case. The two meanings most appropriately and commonly assigned to the word history are very general ones, whereas the only meaning of the word biography in current use is a very different one. Therefore, although there may be no harm, or even may be gain, in giving the term history at times a special meaning for the special purpose of opposing it to biography, it must be erroneous to represent biography as the genus and history as the species. On the other hand, it is perfectly reasonable to regard history, even when meaning thereby human history, as a genus of which the history of individuals (biography) is one species and the history of societies another. When Dr Arnold proceeds to represent "the life of that highest and sovereign society which we call a State or nation" as especially the proper subject of history, he seems to us, of course, to go still further astray from the truth. There is no real reason discoverable for such exclusiveness. The history of the Church is as much history as the history of the State. The history of philosophy or of art is not less truly history than the history of England or of France.

According to Mr Freeman, "history is past politics and poli-

[1] Lectures on Modern History, p. 3.

tics are present history."[1] This is not a mode of definition which any logician will be found to sanction. It is equivalent to saying that politics and history are the same, and may both be divided into past and present; but it does not tell us what either is. To affirm that this was that and that is this is not a definition of this or that, but only an assertion that something may be called either this or that. Besides, the identification of history with politics proceeds, as has been already indicated, on a view of history which is at once narrow and arbitrary. Further, it is just as true that mathematical history is past mathematics and mathematics are present history, as that political history is past politics and politics are present history. The present state of every species of knowledge and of every form of action is only a moment in the history of that kind of knowledge and action. The whole of human science, experience, and production in the present moment becomes history—past history, as soon as the moment is gone. The whole of man's past was once present thought, feeling, and action. There is nothing peculiar to politics in this respect.

Professor Creighton, while pronouncing Mr Freeman's definition "narrow, and therefore misleading," refuses to accept the view that history "includes everything that man has either thought or wrought," on the ground that it is "so wide as to become vague, fixing no definite limit to the province of history as bordering on other fields of learning." He deems it better, therefore, "to regard history as the record of human action, and of thought only in its direct influence upon action."[2] This attempt at mediation does not seem to be successful. Why regard history in the way described rather than contrariwise as the record of human thought, and of action only in its direct influence on thought? The development of thought is no more to be understood apart from the development of action than the development of action apart from the development of thought. He who would comprehend the movement of philosophy, for example, must view it in relation to the course of political and social change and to the whole general history of humanity. Even if States and politics could be shown to be

[1] Methods of Historical Study, p. 44.
[2] English Historical Review, vol. i. pp. 2, 3.

what Professor Creighton calls them, "the chief part of the subject of history," that would not prove them to be more directly or truly its subject than anything else which has a history. In itself politics is no more history than is theology or metaphysics. It is only its history which is history, and their histories are also history, as are all developments of the mind and will of man in time. It is hence as easy to distinguish history in its widest sense from science, as in its narrowest. The measure of comprehensiveness assigned to the word history is not what affects the power of distinguishing it from science; and when history is confounded with science the confusion is not one of degree but of nature, not quantitative but qualitative.

M. Bourdeau thinks history should be defined "la science des développements de la raison."[1] Of course, history itself is no more a science than an art. The definition, therefore, is only the definition of the science, but it implies that history itself consists of the developments of reason. Is this implication correct? Certainly not altogether. There is much else in man than reason, and not only many things but many developments in his history which must be referred not to reason but to the impulses and passions which so often seduce and subdue reason. At the same time there is more to approve than to reject in M. Bourdeau's definition. It fixes attention on what is undoubtedly the main cause of that which is most characteristic in human history, its marvellous variety and its inexhaustible progressiveness, so unlike the narrowly determined limits and monotonously recurring phases of animal life. The history of man is so peculiar and significant as to be entitled to be especially called history, just because the reason which is distinctive of man is essentially a principle of change and progress. M. Bourdeau has seen and expressed this very clearly; not more so, however, than was done by Jouffroy almost sixty years ago.

Professor Bernheim defines history as "the science of the development of men in their working as social beings."[2] This also is only a definition of written history, and will obviously

[1] L'Histoire et les Historiens, p. 5.
[2] Lehrbuch der historischen Methode (1889), p. 4.

not even apply to the great majority of written histories. It cannot apply to mere narration, however accurate and brilliant. It applies only to what is called genetic or scientific history. It implies that there is no other form of written history, which is a supposition contrary to fact. Besides, although the actual history which is the object of written history may be a development, development is a word at least as much in need of definition as history. Historical development is so unlike logical and biological development, that it must have a differentia. Further, scientific history, or the science of history, should not assume but prove history to be a development. To prove development in history by exhibiting its precise nature is the aim, not the presupposition, of historical science. The last words of the definition, "in their working as social beings," also require explanation. Professor Bernheim gives it. He wishes "working" (*Bethätigung*) to be understood as inclusive of all human states as well as acts, and "social" to be held to comprehend rational, spiritual, political, &c. With his desire thus to embrace in his definition humanity in all its aspects I entirely sympathise; but I cannot see that the terms of his definition in themselves do justice to his thought.

History, understood as has been indicated, may be dealt with in various ways. Thus, in the first place, attempts may be made to recall and to transmit the memory of it. As a being who looks before and after, man is naturally interested both in the past and in the future, and impelled to seek to relate himself with both. Hence he endeavours to communicate the traditions which he has received, loves to narrate his experiences, and labours to perpetuate the fame of his achievements. The minds of men are occupied even in the lowest stages of existence with reminiscences of their own or others' past. The speech of all men, and especially of common and uneducated men, is largely narrative. Indeed, the history which has thus history for its subject is not unjustly described by Carlyle as "man's earliest and simplest expression of thought." "As we *do* nothing but enact history, so likewise we *say* little but recite it." History recorded and recited attained in course of time a literary form; and there is no species of literature which has since been more continuously or widely cultivated, which has passed through

more stages, assumed more shapes, spread out more branches; which has responded to more wants and interests, conveyed a greater wealth of information, reflected human nature more fully, or presented a broader surface to the light of truth. History as a species of literature has therefore, like eloquence, poetry, the drama, or romance, a history of its own, and one which is most extensive and instructive. It is not my purpose to attempt to write a history of history. Others, with more or less success, have endeavoured to do so, in whole or in part.[1] I must, however, have continuous reference to the course and character of historical literature during the period within which historical philosophy has been developed. Historical literature tends as it advances to become increasingly philosophical. Perfect delineation presupposes perfect knowledge. Excellence in narration must be in proportion to the accuracy and completeness of acquaintance with the facts narrated. But science or philosophy is simply the exactest and fullest knowledge,—knowledge at its highest and best. The more comprehensively, profoundly, penetratingly, and, in a word, truthfully, historians deal with their themes, the more entitled are they to rank as historical philosophers. All great historians have looked at the events which they narrated from general points of view, and have formed general conclusions as to the interrelations and significance of those events. They have had, that is to say, at least an implicit philosophy of the history which they have attempted to exhibit. And their philosophy, although it can claim no right of exemption from criticism, is entitled to be approached with the respect due to the views of men who speak on matters with which they are specially familiar. It may reasonably be expected, therefore, that I should indicate to some extent what has been the philosophy implied in the

[1] There is no adequate account of the development of historiography as a whole. G. Rosa's 'Storia della Storia' (Milano, 1884) is to be commended as a general sketch. Prof. C. K. Adams's 'Manual of Historical Literature' (London, 1882) gives good descriptions of the best histories, but does not profess to be itself a history. Wachler's 'Geschichte der historischen Forschung und Kunst seit der Wiederherstellung der literarischen Kultur in Europa,' treats only, as its title indicates, of the modern epoch, and was published so long ago as 1812-20. There are a considerable number of histories of special periods of historiography, some of which will be mentioned when reference to them is more appropriate.

writings of various eminent historians who have made no claim to philosophise on history, or who have even professed contempt for historical philosophy in every form. At the same time, it will be necessary to exercise restraint in this direction. I must clearly not yield to the temptation to write essays on the characteristics of eminent historians; and, indeed, cannot legitimately do more than attempt to elicit and exhibit the distinctive and guiding ideas of those among them who have shown special originality and insight in their interpretations of historical phenomena. As a rule, the historians who have had no explicit philosophy of history have had but a very meagre implicit one; and the aversion which they have shown to historical generalisation has had its source mainly in their own want of generalising power. Not a few historians of repute owe their fame entirely to their critical and literary talent, and are as regards scientific and philosophical capacity below mediocrity.

Historiography is not only an art which has a history, but the subject of a process of theorising which has also a history. How should history be studied? How should it be presented? With what aims should it be written? What are the sources of historical knowledge, and how are we to judge of their genuineness, integrity, and credibility? What are the aids, instruments, conditions, and processes of historical research? In what ways are the materials of history to be collected, sifted, analysed, compared, and distributed? How are we to trace the movement of history as an organic evolution, to estimate institutions and events according to their real significance in relation to one another, and to the whole of which they are parts, and to attain to a clear and truthful apprehension of the spirit of history, separated from which all else in it must be merely shell and husk? What are the mental requirements of the historian? What are the qualities of good historical art, and the style appropriate to each variety of historical composition? To answer these and similar questions is the office of Historic, as it is now commonly called. They have gradually and naturally presented themselves with the development of historiography itself. The simplest—those of least interest to science—those which related to history merely

as a pleasant art or useful instrument—were the first to present themselves; and antiquity did not get beyond them. On these questions, but on none of the deeper problems as to the nature and methods of historical inquiry, Polybius and Plutarch, Cicero and Quinctilian, had to some extent reflected; and especially Lucian, whose essay on "How to write History," so witty in its banter and so shrewd in its advice, is justly celebrated, devoid although it be of philosophical insight. It was only with the Renaissance that treatises on the study, composition, and uses of history became common, and that the idea began to spread that the ἀμέθοδος ὕλη of history might, like that of nature, be elaborated into science. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, while there were still hardly any good modern historians, so many persons had undertaken to show how history should be written that Fresnoy aptly applies to the situation the words of the old French poet,—

> "La Cour en conseillers foisonne,
> Mais vient-on à l'exécution,
> On ne rencontre plus personne."

There has ever since been a continuous, and at times a copious, flow of writings on the theory of historiography; but only during the present century have the deeper questions above indicated—those which clearly and directly concern the science or philosophy of history—been raised and dealt with. In particular, the essay of W. v. Humboldt, "Über die Aufgabe des Geschichtschreibers," initiated a more thorough and fruitful investigation into all the relevant problems. The literature of Historic must therefore not be wholly ignored by us. Its course has been, on the whole, one of advance from commonplace reflection on history towards a philosophical comprehension of the conditions and processes on which the formation of historical science depends. Practical recognition must be given to this fact by noting the more important phases which Historic has assumed. And especially must due attention be given to those recent writings on Historic which are of a truly philosophical character, and which expressly treat of the methods by which historical truth is to be attained and historical science constituted. We have, however, no further concern with the literature of Historic. And this is fortunate; for a very large

portion of it is so trivial and superficial that it can hardly ever have been of use even to persons of the humblest capacity, and may certainly now be safely consigned to kindly oblivion, while of the not wholly worthless remainder much more of the interest is literary and practical than scientific and philosophical.

It is, then, neither the history of Historiography nor of Historic which is here intended to be traced. It is that of the Science or Philosophy of History. Human history may be treated as the subject of science and philosophy. The reign of law somehow extends over human affairs. Events are connected by some determinate relationships, and one social state arises out of another with which it retains some correspondence in character. The world of intelligent and moral agency has not been abandoned to caprice and chance, is not mere anarchy and chaos, but is embraced within a system of order, more or less perfect; and amidst all its apparent confusion and incoherence there has been some sort of growth, some sort of development of the mind and spirit of the human race. Much that has happened in history has sunk into oblivion, or is imperfectly known; but there is nothing known in history which is essentially inexplicable, nor is there any reason to suppose that anything has ever happened in history which was from its very nature incapable either of being clearly apprehended or fully comprehended. All the component facts of history can be accounted for historically, just as those of the physical world can be accounted for physically; and the whole of history is not less a whole of law and order than that of nature. Besides, just as the world of plants, for example, while a whole in regard to its own parts, is itself a part in regard to the universe in which it is placed and by the fundamental laws of which it is controlled, so the world of history, while similarly a whole, is also similarly a part; and hence, while its particular events may be so far satisfactorily explained by the agencies which operate within itself, its development as a whole can only be understood when viewed in connection with all other spheres of existence, or, in other words, in the light of all science. This is equivalent to saying that history may be the subject of science and philosophy in the only sense in which it is

assumed in this work that there is any science or philosophy of history.

There has been a considerable amount of discussion as to whether history ought to be regarded as the subject of a science or of a philosophy; in other words, as to whether the highest form of the study of history—its study as an orderly, organic, intelligible system within, and related to, the system of the universe—ought to be called the Science or the Philosophy of History. Some who believe in a philosophy of history deny that there can be any science of history. Goldwin Smith, for instance, in his lectures "On the Study of History," lays down, that "a science of history is one thing and a philosophy another; a science of history can rest on nothing short of causation, while a philosophy of history rests upon connection; such connection as we know, and in every process and word of life assume, that there is between the action and its motive, between motives and circumstances, between the conduct of men and the effect produced upon their character, between historic antecedents and their results";[1] and relying on this distinction, he proceeds to urge a vigorous polemic against the position that there is a science of history, while earnestly maintaining that there is a philosophy of history. This view, and all views of the same class, I reject. The notion that historical results are connected with their antecedents, yet uncaused or only partially caused events, is almost too unreasonable for discussion. Results or events not fully caused, are no more conceivable in the moral and social world, than in the mechanical and physical world. So long as those who believe that there are uncaused or imperfectly caused events in history fail to point out any of them, reason is warranted in seeking for causation in history not less than in nature. Intelligent defenders of free agency do not oppose it to causation, but represent it as the highest type of causation. Those physical studies which all admit to be sciences are by no means only conversant with connections of causation. Historical connection is often manifestly as strictly causal as chemical or biological connection.

There are authors who regard mathematical and physical

[1] The Study of History, p. 51.

studies as alone entitled to be called sciences, and who would call all other studies philosophical. It seems to them that in the sphere of mental and social life connection is so vague, and causation so different from what it is among measurable and sensible objects, that knowledge of such connection and causation ought not to be termed science at all. Hence, as historical phenomena are, on the whole, mental phenomena, these authors, while willing to allow that there is a philosophy of history, will not admit that there is any science of history. Of all ways, however, in which it has been proposed to draw a rigid line of separation between science and philosophy, this of treating all physical studies as sciences and all mental studies as philosophy, is probably the worst. It rests on a confused view of the nature and bearing of causation in psychology, ethics, and history. It shows ignorance of what constitutes science, of the proper character and office of philosophy, and of how science and philosophy are related. It does injustice to science by implicitly denying that it has anything to do with philosophy or philosophy with it; and injustice to philosophy by representing it as an inferior kind of knowledge—as knowledge which is not scientific because vague and dubious.

Some writers, on the other hand, would only speak of a Science of History. The name of Philosophy of History has been so utterly discredited in their ears by the character of much which has been put forth as such, that they would drop it altogether, and keep to one which seems to them more definite and less liable to abuse. It is not difficult to understand this view, or even, in a considerable measure, to sympathise with it. All kinds of baseless and worthless speculations — even the merest dreams and vagaries — have been confidently presented as philosophy. The most unsubstantial and fantastic hypotheses which metaphysics or theology, analogy or imagination, could supply or suggest, have been pretentiously maintained to explain the course and meaning of human development. Hence a certain aversion to the use of the term philosophy both in general and in application is, perhaps, natural and excusable. We must not allow it, however, to carry us too far. And it does so when we admit no distinction between science and philosophy, or, indeed, virtually

deny that there is any philosophy. If we might thereby be helped, as Mr Morley says, to "put from us vague modes of historical philosophising," we would also be in danger of getting ensnared in the prejudices generated by scientific specialism. A science exclusive of philosophy is to be shunned, as well as a philosophy exclusive of science. Science is not to be dissociated from philosophy, any more than philosophy from science. Science can only prosper when it strives to become philosophic, as philosophy can only prosper when it strives to become scientific. I thus no more believe in a mere science of history than in a mere philosophy of history. All that I can grant, therefore, to those who, for the reason mentioned, would speak only of a science of history, is that any professed philosophy of history which is not in accordance with and even demanded by the science of history — which does not receive real confirmation from the facts of history and tend to the true elucidation of these facts—must be worthless and delusive.

I cannot see any objection to often employing the terms science and philosophy interchangeably. Rigidly and continually to distinguish them is not only what no one does, but what no one should do, inasmuch as it tends to lead readers to overlook the intimate connection and community of nature of science and philosophy. If we are resolved to use the word philosophy only in its strictly appropriate technical sense, we must bear in mind that there is but one sense which can either historically or logically make good its claim as such. And in this sense philosophy is not contradistinguished from the sciences but comprehensive of them,—not a branch or branches of knowledge growing alongside of other branches, but the root and trunk out of which all the branches grow, and the life by which, and the crown to which, they grow,—not the rational appreciation of particular aspects of the intelligible world, but of that world as a whole. In a word, philosophy in this sense is the knowledge of knowledge, the science of the sciences, universal not particular science. But in this sense manifestly no special science or study can claim to be philosophy as against any other special science or study. In this sense one has no more right to speak of moral philosophy than of natural philo-

sophy, or of the philosophy of history than of the philosophy of botany. In this sense philosophy is one and indivisible, universal and all-pervading.

It follows from the very nature of philosophy as thus understood that no special science or particular department of knowledge is philosophy strictly speaking. It follows not less, however, that no special science is excluded from having the closest connection with and interest in philosophy, so that each special science, and even every special subject, may be naturally said to have its philosophy; the philosophy of a subject as distinguished from its science being the view or theory of the relations of the subject to other subjects and to the known world in general, as distinguished from the view or theory of it as isolated or in itself. It is a grievous error when science renounces and discards philosophy. The mere scientist—the scientist who gazes exclusively at his subject and refuses to look at its surroundings and relationships — is not the true scientist; the philosophic scientist alone is the true scientist. Philosophy and science should be combined. Hence we may often use either word; and the one word rather than the other according as the philosophical or scientific mode of contemplation and treatment is the more prominent. Thus, when a department of knowledge is very comprehensive; when it manifestly cannot be properly cultivated otherwise than in relation to the whole of knowledge; when it implies, includes, and utilises a number of special studies or disciplines, themselves entitled to be called sciences,—the name of philosophy may well be preferred to that of science as the generic part of its designation. The separate physical sciences, far from rendering unnecessary or impossible, afford a basis for and require as a means of unifying, supplementing, and harmonising themselves, a general elucidation of the physical world, to which the name philosophy of nature would be appropriate, and which might be quite free from the metaphysical nonsense which discredited the *Naturphilosophie* of German speculation. There are a large number of special theological disciplines which treat only of aspects or departments of religion, and these may certainly be more appropriately called sciences than philosophies; but there is also an all-comprehensive science of religion—one which treats of

religion in its unity and entirety—one which alone completely answers to the idea and definition of theology,—and this one general theological science, which comprehends and dominates the special theological sciences, so as to be the science of these sciences, may reasonably enough, in accordance with the true distinction between philosophy and science, be called philosophy rather than science—the philosophy of religion. In the same way, when history is studied as a whole and in all relations, it may be spoken of as rather the subject of a philosophy than a science, seeing that no subject is vaster and more complex, or more manifoldly dependent on and intimately connected with all existence and all science. It may be true that the full knowledge of any one thing involves a knowledge of all other things—that the "little flower in the crannied wall" cannot be completely understood until God, man, and the world are understood; but this is only by implication, whereas the knowledge of history is explicitly encyclopedic and universal, all that man knows being as much a part of his history as what he suffers or achieves. In history nature and mind and all the sciences of both meet, and so meet that all these sciences in their entire evolution are but elements of history, and the whole state of science at any moment is but a moment of history, that being called science to-day which will be called history to-morrow. If, therefore, the word philosophy is not to be confined exclusively to the universal—if it may be applied to the particular at all—it may, I think, be most fitly applied to the thorough and comprehensive study of history in its entirety and relationships. So far from agreeing with those who think that the designation "science of history" should be used to the exclusion of that of "philosophy of history," I confess that if restricted to one of them it is the latter which I should prefer. But I can see no reason for making a choice. The only mode of distinguishing between science of history and philosophy of history which seems to me at all admissible, is that which assigns to the science of history the task of ascertaining the course, plan, and laws of history itself, and to the philosophy of history that of tracing the relations of causation and affinity which connect history with other departments of existence and knowledge. But such science and philosophy are so plainly of the same

nature, and each is so manifestly feeble and imperfect without the other, that there can only be an occasional call to separate them, and ordinarily they ought to be combined, whether under the name of science or philosophy it matters little.[1]

The development we have to trace is that of the two in conjunction. We have to exhibit the progress of induction and generalisation from the data of history proper, and also to indicate how history has had light cast upon it from the most various regions of experience and thought. In a word, we must beware of walking in the narrow path of a science which disowns philosophy, while we regard as false all philosophy which does not accord with the findings or promote the advance of science.

I shall not inquire further, in the way of introduction, into the nature of the philosophy of history. Enough has been said to show what is here meant by it, and what will be aimed at in this attempt to trace its development.

Any more strictly formal or logical definition of it than has already been given seems unnecessary. Definitions, indeed, are in such a case of small account. So far from the definition of a science being capable of conveying a knowledge of the science, it is the knowledge of a science which makes the definition of it intelligible. The definition can merely name or indicate the object-matter of the science defined; knowledge of the real nature of that object-matter must come gradually in the measure that the science itself is acquired. The definitions of political economy, ethics, theology, and the philosophy of history, can tell us that these disciplines treat respectively of wealth, morality, religion, and history; but what wealth, morality, religion, and history are, the sciences which deal with them must themselves be left to reveal. To do so is their sole and whole business. Real comprehension of the definition of any science is not a presupposition but a result and reward of the study of the science.

[1] The author has treated more fully of the relations of science to philosophy in a paper on "Philosophy as Scientia Scientiarum," published in the 'Princeton Review,' November 1878. With it may be compared his two articles on "The Classification of the Sciences," published in the 'Presbyterian Review' (New York and Edinburgh), July 1885 and July 1886. He purposes expanding and supplementing these papers so as to form an Introduction to Philosophy.

It has been argued that the author of the present work should have stated at the outset his own conceptions as to the sphere, method, and conclusions of the philosophy of history. It has been urged that if he had thus begun by expounding a theory of his own he could have criticised more effectively and concisely the various theories which he passed in review; and that as some definite knowledge of the philosophy of history is needed to render its history fully intelligible, such knowledge should have been the first thing imparted. This view may be plausible, but it does not seem to me to be correct.

A mere sketch of a theory of history of my own, or, in other words, an unreasoned and unconfirmed statement of my own convictions and conclusions as to the philosophy of history, could serve no good purpose. It could not fail to do injustice to my own theory. I cannot doubt but that the most concise and effective mode of stating and recommending that theory will be to expound and defend it not before but after having given reasons for rejecting those which are inconsistent with it. And to condemn the theories of others because they did not agree with an unproved theory of mine would be a most unreasonable mode of dealing with them. Indeed, to criticise the theories of others by any theory of my own, although it might undoubtedly be a very "concise" process, could not be a really effective one, owing to its manifest injustice. One theory of history ought not to be judged of by another, but by its conformity or nonconformity to the facts of history and the laws of reason. These are the only criteria by which I deem myself entitled to judge the theories which may come before me.

On the other hand, to hold that the author of a history of the philosophy of history must introduce it with an adequately developed and established system of the philosophy of history, seems as utterly unreasonable as to maintain that an historian of chemistry must begin his history with an exposition of the science. A man not conversant with chemistry ought certainly not to attempt to write its history, and must even read its history with comparatively little profit. Yet the historian of chemistry may well leave it to other men to publish systematic treatises on chemistry, and to his readers to get from other teachers than himself the knowledge necessary to peruse a his-

tory of chemistry with intelligence and to advantage. It is not otherwise as regards the philosophy of history. The man who would write a history of it should make himself acquainted not only with the various theories of history which have been propounded, but as far as he can with history itself and with all that throws light upon it, for it is by history itself that he must estimate the worth of the theories which profess to explain it; and the most qualified student and judge of such a history will be the man whose knowledge of history is most extensive and profound. There are no lack of philosophies of history already in existence, and adding another to the number would not greatly help my readers, while it would probably be unduly attractive to my critics. A knowledge of history, and reflection on the problems presented by history, will be found to be the best preparation; but, of course, the possession of such preparation must be here presupposed. It certainly cannot be here supplied.

The development of the philosophy of history has taken place chiefly in France, Germany, Italy, and Britain. It will be traced in each of these nations separately. In connection, indeed, with French historical philosophy the Belgian will be surveyed, in connection with the German the Dutch, and in connection with the British the American. But the division and distribution of the work will be the fourfold one indicated.

Against this method objections will readily suggest themselves. It will be said that it must destroy the unity of the work and break the flow of the narrative; that it ascribes too much to the influence of nationality and too little to the common and collective development of civilisation; and that it necessitates undesirable repetitions, inasmuch as it requires the same school of historical philosophy if it has spread into several lands to be described more than once, although one comprehensive view of it would be in every respect more satisfactory. It will be concluded that the natural and philosophical method of procedure must be not the national but the universal method; one which would begin by tracing a complete sketch of the intellectual development of an epoch, and then, without reference to the difference of nationalities, bring together all that the epoch has done for what one is accustomed to call the philosophy of

history. In this way, it would seem that the influences which have most powerfully affected the interpretation of the history of humanity—as, for example, the progress of the sciences, the spread of new ideas and theories, general social changes, and political events of wide-reaching significance—will be best exhibited.[1]

Now I fully admit that these considerations are not only very plausible but contain a certain amount of truth. They caused me to adopt with reluctance the method which I follow, and only after I had tried and been forced to abandon the alternative method. I began with the general method, and found it easy to proceed according to it until the nineteenth century was reached. Then the objections to it speedily began to make themselves felt, and gradually I was shut up to the conclusion that, in my hands at least, it would yield a less satisfactory result than that to which it had at first sight seemed preferable. The great bulk of the history lies within a very limited period —some sixty or seventy years. Yet due regard must be had, as in all history, to the chronology. But how can this be done in a narrative which has to embrace all the chief peoples of our civilisation, and which is not to be a mere outline but a detailed account? Not otherwise than by an incessant and intolerable leaping from one country to another, which must far more effectually destroy unity of work and continuity of narrative than the method alleged specially to produce these effects. The view even of the course of causation or genetic evolution of the history will thus be far more broken up and obscured. Within the national developments all the causes, general and special, work continuously and organically, so that their action can only be rightly exhibited in a complete and uninterrupted narrative. The general development, on the other hand, if it fail to include and incorporate the national developments, would prove itself so abstract as to be worthless; and if it do justice to them, it must constantly lose itself in them, and cease to be general except in name.

I readily acknowledge that in tracing the history of philosophy, or of any of its departments, too much may be ascribed to nationality and too little to a common civilisation. There is

[1] A. Stern, in 'Revue Historique,' Janv.-Fév. 1877.

no more fundamental distinction between the ancient ethnic world and the modern Christian world than that in the latter, nations are not, as they were in the former, so separated and isolated as to live an exclusively national life, but are in continuous and conscious communion with each other, members of a vast intellectual and spiritual system, participant in a general culture. In the ancient world Egypt and Assyria, India and China, Israel and Greece, were, as regards thought and belief, philosophy and religion, national in a sense and measure in which in modern Europe Italy and France, Germany and England, are not and cannot be. For any of these latter nations to have a purely national religion, culture, or philosophy, like the nations of oriental and classical antiquity, it must renounce its share in the splendid spiritual inheritance of the great family of peoples to which it belongs. Modern thought is in character, substance, development, and general direction, common and identical; the modern spirit has a unity which reveals the absolute spirit; and in the modern world each nation can, consequently, only hope to develop and perfect its own life through free communion with other nations and participation in the fulness of the universal life. But it does not follow that the historian is entitled to treat nationality as of only secondary significance in the modern world. It does not follow that it has become an intermittent agency which admits of no continuous history, or one so feeble in its influence that it may often be left out of account. In fact it is still the most permanent, comprehensive, and potent of historical factors. It alone so acts on and with the various general elements of civilisation as to give them real existence in a concrete and organic unity. It is to a people what individuality is to a person, and therefore to history what individuality is to biography. Wherever character tells much on the development of thought, no other power can compare in influence with it. And its force is not a decreasing one. In spite of superficial appearances to the contrary, nationalities are not disappearing but increasingly developing and characterising themselves. As the individual steadily attains to clearer self-knowledge and greater freedom and power in the manifestation of his true self, so each growing nation is seen gradually to enter more

fully on the possession of its genius, and gradually to reveal more distinctly what its character and capacities are. The advancing unity of civilised humanity is reflected in and attained through the increasing originality and self-activity of the nations which are its constituent members.

The relation of nationality to history being what it is, it seems very desirable to give a continuous and complete account of the development of historical philosophy in each of the chief countries in which such philosophy has been cultivated. It is only thus that justice is likely to be done to the historico-philosophical work of each country. It is only thus, perhaps, that there can be a chronologically consecutive narrative at all. Rocholl, who has chosen the other method, is led by it to treat of Bossuet before Macchiavelli, of Vico before Bacon, of Adam Smith before Bodin, of Voltaire before Leibniz, of Mamiani before Condorcet, &c. Possibly these errors need not have been committed, but I doubt if numerous smaller errors of a similar kind could have been avoided, and errors of such a kind are fatal in any historical narrative. It is possible to write a consecutive uninterrupted narrative within national limits. In doing so, it may and ought to be indicated, so far as is relevant, in what ways and in what measure each nation has been influenced by others. It is true that in tracing the development of historical philosophy according to this method a school or system will in certain cases have to be dealt with more than once. But will this be unnecessary or undesirable repetition? What school or system of historical philosophy has not, when brought under new national conditions, greatly changed its nature and character?

After the national developments of historical philosophy have been traced, a comprehensive delineation of their relationships and of the common movement will still be required. But when a competent knowledge of the particular developments can be presupposed, the general survey may be comparatively brief. The reader will then have been prepared fully to understand it, and to form an intelligent and independent judgment regarding it.

II.

The origin of the philosophy of history, its absolute origin or commencement, is not to be dated from the time when it began to be cultivated as a distinct division of knowledge. It is at a comparatively late stage that any science definitively separates itself from contiguous fields of knowledge and assumes an independent form. The man of genius who is called the founder of a science merely brings together its already existing elements, its *disjecta membra*, which lie far and wide apart embedded in the most diverse studies, organically unites them through some great thought, some happy discovery, and breathes into the body thus formed the breath of life. There is no science, even among those which like geology or political economy we in one sense rightly enough call recent, whose history is all in the daylight; there is none which has come at once into the full enjoyment of individual existence like a Pallas from the brain of Jove; the origins of science, like the origins of all things, lie beyond the utmost limits research has yet attained. In very old poetry, and in the very oldest mythology, there are rudimentary geological speculations. The atomic doctrine of Dalton is but a more developed form of the hypothesis maintained by the Hindu Kanada and the Greek Democritus. The development theory of Darwin goes clearly back not only to Maillet and Lamarck, but to Anaximander and Empedocles. Although political economy established its claims to be a separate science only in the eighteenth century, it may be truly said, seeing that economical laws have always operated and always forced men to take some cognisance of them and yield some obedience to them, to have had an existence under one form or another always and everywhere. The philosophy of history is no exception to the rule which every other science has obeyed; on the contrary, it is perhaps its most striking example. While men still dispute as to the reality, and even as to the possibility, of its separate scientific existence, religion, poetry, speculation of various kinds, political movements, the cares and trials of common life, have for countless generations been bringing its problems in manifold forms before the human mind

and into contact with the human heart. As diffused through these things it is, and for we know not how long has been, widely present. There may have been a time during which man felt in no degree the mystery of his own being, but no direct records remain of such a time. So far as can be gathered from the mere literary monuments of our race, a kind of philosophy of history may have been as old as history itself, and the first question man proposed to himself may have been that which Milton puts into the mouth of Adam: "How came I thus, how here?"

Religion has, at least to some extent, its source in the same quest of causes from which proceed philosophy and science. The lowest forms of religion are not mere embodiments of the feelings of fear, or love, or dependence, but consist in part of rude speculations as to the making and the meaning of nature and of man. It is still truer of Asiatic than of European civilisations that they are based on religion, and that the rationale of their distinctive institutions is to be sought in their theological creeds. In all the chief religions of the East we find reflections more or less elevated on the origin and destiny of the race; attempts more or less plausible to tell whence man has come and whither he is going; how the present is related to the past and future; how the lower world is connected with a higher. Brahmanism and Buddhism have supplied to Schopenhauer the elements of his historical pessimism. The dualistic conception of nature and history which was the kernel of the Mazdaic faith has also been the germ of various philosophic hypotheses. The Old Testament representations of God, of His relations to man, and His actings in history, and its teachings as to human unity, moral retribution, future redemption, and a Messianic kingdom, have often been accepted and exhibited as the explanation of universal history. That Christianity, like all other religions, contains a theory of history, although only under the form proper to a religion, has been strikingly stated by the French philosopher Jouffroy as follows: "There is a little book which is taught to children, and on which they are examined in the church. If we read this book, which is the Catechism, we shall find a solution of all the problems which have been proposed; all of them without ex-

ception. If we ask the Christian, whence comes the human race, he knows; or whither it goes, he knows; or how it goes, he knows. If we ask that poor child, who has never reflected on the subject in his life, why he is here below, and what will become of him after death, he will give you a sublime answer, which he will not thoroughly comprehend, but which is none the less admirable for that. If we ask him, how the world was created and for what end; why God has placed in it plants and animals; how the earth was peopled; whether by a single family or by many; why men speak different languages; why they suffer, why they struggle, and how all this will end, he knows it all. Origin of the world, origin of the species, question of races, destiny of man in this life and in the other, relations of man to God, duties of man to his fellow-men, rights of man over the creation,—he is ignorant of none of these points; and when he shall have grown up, he will as little hesitate with regard to natural right, political right, or the right of nations: all this proceeds with clearness, and as it were of itself, from Christianity."[1] It was most natural that the philosophy of history should have first clearly presented itself in Christendom, and in some such form as that in which it appeared in the 'De Civitate Dei' of Augustine. It was most natural also that in medieval Christendom, dominated as it was by Christian theology, no other kind of philosophy of history should have arisen. The only philosophy of history of which the medieval mind could conceive was one the principles of which were Christian dogmas. In modern times the relation between Christianity and this philosophy, as between Christianity and philosophy in general, has become looser and more indeterminate. Philosophies of history are now written from all possible religious and anti-religious points of view. During the present century all forms of Christianity, all forms of religion, have been sought both to be proved and disproved, glorified and discredited, by means of historical philosophy. A still greater change is that in modern times many endeavours have been made to explain history without any theological or religious presuppositions, that is, in a purely scientific or philo-

[1] Jouffroy, 'Premiers mélanges phil.,' 3d éd., p. 330-371, as abridged and translated by Ripley in Introductory Notice to Jouffroy's 'Philosophical Essays.'

sophic manner. This mode of dealing with history will doubtless increasingly prevail, and the older theological method of procedure gradually disappear, but there can never come a time when a man's convictions as to religion will be without influence on his historical theorising. The same views of the infancy of humanity cannot be entertained by those who accept the first twelve chapters of Genesis as verbally inspired and by those who do not, nor of its future by those who regard religion as essentially true and by those who believe it to be essentially delusive. The course of historical speculation has been continuously influenced by the course of religious belief.

Philosophy does not assume form and body till long after religion, and it does so at first, wherever there is a great religion, on the basis of religion and not on a foundation of its own. India, which is the great philosophical land of Asia, had such a religion, and the philosophy of India never severed itself from its religion. Its chief systems, the six *darsanas*, are classed as orthodox and heterodox; five of them rest on the Vedas; and although it cannot be said that the Sankhya acknowledges the authority of any sacred book, it proposes to itself for final end a religious aim, the securing of salvation to man, and recommends the pursuit of truth only as a means to its accomplishment. It was otherwise in Greece. The anthropomorphic polytheism of the Greeks, although singularly beautiful, being mainly a product of imagination and the æsthetic sense, with no depth of root either in the reason or conscience, with feeble philosophical and moral possibilities, has no claim to be regarded as a great religion, and indeed would seem to have been in some measure outgrown by the Greek mind even when Homer wrote. Hence Greek philosophy from its origin kept itself essentially distinct from Greek mythology, the influence of which upon it at the strongest was only secondary; at a very early date it began not only silently to undermine but openly to assail it as irrational and immoral. It is its characteristic and glory that from first to last it was free and independent, acknowledging subjection to no authority save that of reason alone. This philosophy having fulfilled its mission, expired in a struggle with Christianity; and the classical world and its wisdom gave place to a new social order and a higher wisdom.

Another world arose of which Christianity was the central power, the dominant principle, and again for centuries philosophy was rested on theology, as it had been in ancient India. Only slowly, and with difficulty, and in comparatively recent times, has philosophy once more recovered its independence and ceased to be the handmaid or bondwoman of theology. The Hindu *darsanas* and the scholastic philosophies were, then, systems of philosophy based on systems of theology. One consequence was, that in a sense they were as comprehensive as the theologies with which they were connected. Whatever problems the Vedas were supposed to have shed light on, the Hindu philosophers felt emboldened to deal with. Whatever the Church received as doctrine, the scholastic philosophers made it their aim to develop and apply. In the Indian and medieval philosophies there is, accordingly, no lack of historical theory of a sort, as there is no lack of any kind of theory of which the germs may be discovered in the authoritative sources of Brahmanism and Christianity.

The Greek philosophies, although not based like Hindu and medieval philosophies on religion, none the less attempted to compass the explanation of the entire universe. They did not, as modern philosophies generally do, presuppose the positive sciences, but occupied their place. These sciences did not then exist. There was only one vast vague philosophy, at least until Aristotle broke it up to some extent into parts and laid the foundations of certain sciences; and that philosophy, although ever baffled, ever renewed its efforts to explain nothing less than the mystery of all that is. It has to be acknowledged that even in its oldest form, its rude Ionian stage, when assuming water and air and indeterminate matter to be first principles, it did not overlook that the origin of man, the existence of intelligence, and the gradation of intelligence, required to be accounted for no less than the character and arrangement of the material portions of the universe. In the course of its development it perhaps gained few permanent and positive results, but besides educating the human faculties, it was accompanied by an ever-widening view and ever-deepening sense of the difficulty and magnitude of the problem it sought to solve. Man and society, in particular, gradually bulked more prominently

before it, and commanded a constantly increasing share of attention, until at length Plato from the standpoint of idealism, and Aristotle from that of realism, elaborated those two memorable theories of society which at once summed up the past and represented the great antagonistic movements of political life in the future.

Philosophy asserted its independence of theology at the Renaissance, and sought the basis of certitude, not in authority or revelation, but in thought and experience. It was long, however, before it earnestly applied itself to the interpretation and elucidation of history. Bacon, Descartes, Locke, Spinoza had no historical philosophy, although they have exercised more or less influence on its development. With the eighteenth century history became a favourite subject of the ratiocination which then generally passed for philosophy; but only in the nineteenth century has it been sought to submit it to a profound and systematic treatment as the appropriate matter of a constituent department of philosophy. In this last century every philosophical school in Germany has laboured at the construction of a philosophy of history in accordance with its own principles. Not a few of the systems reared in consequence are already fallen into ruin, but a great general result has notwithstanding been attained—a recognition on the part of all thoughtful men of the necessity under which philosophy lies to explain, if possible, the course and significance of human development as a whole. In Britain, until recently, what was called philosophy was little more than psychology, and a psychology which confined its attention almost exclusively to the analysis of the phenomena of the individual consciousness; but now a broader and worthier conception of philosophy prevails, and its direct interest in the study of the collective life of mankind is in consequence generally recognised. Our Spencerians and Neo-Hegelians are at one in holding that a philosophy must include a theory of history, and for this view they have been able to secure an easy triumph.

It is obvious that there can scarcely be political disquisition without historical speculation. As soon as political thought comes forth into life it is found to oscillate between two poles —between despotism and anarchy—the extreme of social au-

thority and the extreme of individual independence. Before political thought awakens, social authority predominates. The man as an individual does not exist, but is merged in the family, clan, city, or nation. But in every progressive society there comes a time when its stronger minds feel that they are not merely parts of a social organism, but have a life and destiny, rights and duties of their own, and simply as men. There are, then, two principles in the world—the principle of authority and the principle of liberty, the principle of society and the principle of individualism. These two principles coexist at first in a few individuals, but in process of time they come not only to coexist in some degree in all, but to manifest themselves apart, and then there are not only two principles in the individual but two parties in the State, the one inclining more to the side of social authority, and the other more towards individual independence. There thus arises a conservative and a liberal party; each party existing in virtue of its assertion of a truth, but existing only as a party because it does not assert the whole truth; each conferring its special services; each having its special dangers; each being certain to ruin any society in which it succeeds in crushing the other; but the two securing both order and progress, partly by counteracting each other, and partly by co-operating with each other. Now it is not until these two parties emerge and their respective claims come into open conflict that there is any active political thought, any general political theory; and hence political thought, political speculation at least, is from the very first forced on historical speculation. The problem which is its root, out of which it issues, is no other than this,—What is the relation of the past to the present? What influence ought the past to have over the present, and society over the individual? Where between slavish deference to all that is and a proud and wilful rejection of it, lies the golden mean at which political wisdom aims? But this problem involves a whole philosophy of history.

It was, therefore, altogether natural that historical reflection should have received in Greece a special stimulus from the Sophists, who effected in philosophy the transition from cosmological to psychological speculation, and who substituted in politics the principle of individualism for that of social author-

ity; whose chief merit was assertion of the rights of the subject, and whose radical error was denial of the rights of the object, both in philosophy and politics. It was natural, also, that the clearest and deepest political thinker of the classical world, Aristotle, should have been the man who came nearest being the founder of the philosophy of history. He had, it is true, scarcely a conception of progress, and still less of laws of progress, but he had studied closely the constitution of all the Greek States and surrounding peoples; had a full appreciation of the importance of the analysis and comparison of different forms of government, and employed with rare skill and success both processes; and had a most remarkable insight into the requirements, composition, working, and influence of every species of polity which had until his time been tried. Hence he had singularly correct, profound, and comprehensive conceptions of that social stability or order which is the prime condition of social progress.

The historical theories of individual thinkers will always be found largely explicable by the contemporary political condition of the communities to which these thinkers belong. It was the political state of the Italy of his day which led Machiavelli to treat of history as he did. It was the civil strife and distraction in England in the time of Charles I. which suggested to Hobbes his doctrine of the origin and development of society. In this volume we shall be continually required to note how the political changes which have taken place in France have forced men to reconsider the past in the light of the present, and how differently, in consequence, the past has appeared to each new generation. Political ideals and utopias have, perhaps, had as powerful an influence as religious ones on the rise and spread of historical hypotheses. Just now, for example, socialism is the source of a vast amount of historical speculation. Already almost every form of socialism claims to have a philosophy of history of its own. Political reflection and historical theory are often so closely connected that it is difficult or impossible to decide where the one ends and the other begins.

It must further be remarked that the progress of historical study is largely dependent on the general advance of science. The study of history cannot be scientific in an unscientific age.

The rise of a science of history must be preceded by the rise of sciences less difficult of formation. A satisfactory philosophy of history presupposes not only a science of history but sciences of all related things. In antiquity only the Greeks and Romans reached the stage of culture at which a successful treatment of history as an art became possible. Only in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries of the Christian era did the modern mind begin to entertain the hope that history might yield scientific results if a right method of seeking them could be devised. And it was long after before much promise appeared of the hope being likely to be realised. It was impossible that the processes of induction could be successfully applied to historical materials before the mind had become accustomed to their use in the various departments of physical science where their employment is so much simpler. It is chiefly through the growth of physical science that the notion of law in human development has arisen, and chiefly through it also that the path which leads to the discovery of law has been opened up. Not till long after induction was familiar to physicists, not till long after Lord Bacon had traced its general theory, was it, or could it be, practised to any considerable extent in historical research.

There is now little danger of the dependence of historical science on other sciences being entirely ignored. The prevalent tendency at present is to consider history as explicable to a far greater extent than it really is by the laws of some naturally antecedent or more general science. Thus it has been represented as a mere dependency of mathematics, for actual men a *moyen homme* being substituted, and for historical criticism and research statistical tables and averages. According to another view history is "a problem of mechanics," one the difficulty of which arises partly from its complexity, and partly from the illusion that there is such a thing as free will. M. Taine regards it as rather a sort of chemistry, all so-called virtues and vices being only "natural products like sugar and vitriol." On the other hand, Dr Draper is of opinion that it is a department of physiology, intellectual development being a physiological process, and the epochs of history stages of physiological growth. Some, like Bagehot, would explain history by biological laws, and others, like Buckle, by geographical

conditions. All these views are one-sided and exaggerated. The comprehension of history is not to be gained exclusively, or even mainly, by deduction from the laws of other sciences; it must be drawn chiefly by induction from the facts of history itself. Yet the views referred to rest on a considerable basis of truth. The various sciences to which appeal is made are really fitted, each in its place and measure, to contribute to the formation of the science and philosophy of history. All the forces and laws of the universe so combine and co-operate in the constitution and life of man, that all the sciences which instruct us as to their nature necessarily help us to understand why the course of history has been what it actually has been.

Some even of the physical sciences are of an essentially historical nature. Geology is an exposition of the history of the earth, and Biology of the history of life. Geological and biological studies have thus for aim to recall and recount an older and vaster history than that of man, one on which the history of man rests, and within which it is enclosed. The method followed in these studies is the same as that which is employed in human history—the method which elicits a knowledge of facts, and of the order and mode of their occurrence, from such signs or traces or records of them as remain. They are closely akin to the science of history alike as regards the matter of which they treat, and the manner in which they treat it.

They are less so, however, than various psychical sciences, as, for instance, comparative psychology and comparative philology, inasmuch as these latter must consist not merely of a knowledge of facts drawn from records, but of facts which are human, —the products of man's thought and will. Comparative psychology traces how the minds and characters of races, peoples, and nations have been formed; comparative philology traces the development of their speech through which their minds and characters, their thoughts and sentiments, are so largely disclosed. Both necessarily follow the historical and comparative method of research, not otherwise than ecclesiastical and political history. It is from the advance of comparative psychology that we may expect to see the most marked progress in the scientific interpretation of history in the near future.

There is likewise the most intimate connection between

history and political economy. Any system of political economy, however ingeniously or logically constructed, which does not rest on a close and comprehensive study of the historical evolution of economic phenomena, must be unstable and unsubstantial. And the whole political and moral, intellectual and spiritual, development of society largely depends on the economic phenomena and changes which it is the business of political economy to explain. The general historical movement of humanity cannot be understood by men who are insufficiently acquainted with the various phases of economic history, and with the laws of economic facts. The growth of science and philosophy, the culture of art and literature, the development of morality and religion, have all, indeed, richly contributed to make history what it is; but, even collectively, they have only in part determined its course, and have all been to a far greater extent than is commonly supposed dependent on conditions of an economic character. The science of history and of political economy are therefore so closely related, that one of them cannot exist in any well-developed form where the other does not. They have never been found apart. In the ancient oriental world neither of them existed. Nor in the classical world, although there both clear thought on economic facts and the power to exhibit and explain historical movements conspicuously displayed themselves. Thucydides owed his superiority as an historian in no slight degree to the clearness with which he saw the bearings of economic circumstances and conditions on the course and fortunes of the Peloponnesian war. Christianity almost spontaneously and inevitably produced a sort of philosophy of history; but a philosophy excessively one-sided, owing to the life of society on earth being viewed so exclusively in relation to religion and eternity, that the interests of time, and the significance of industry, commerce, and wealth, almost faded out of sight. It was not until the eighteenth century was far advanced that the foundations of political economy were laid. The rise of the new science was a fact of the utmost importance for the scientific study of the general development of human societies. It brought with it a vast change in the very mode of looking at history. Montesquieu, Turgot, Adam Smith, and others,

made apparent the interconnection of the two sciences, and initiated a new epoch in the treatment of both. Socialism, although so far a reaction from the economic system dominant in the eighteenth century, tended still more to fix the attention of historical students and historical theorists on the development of industry and the various stages through which the class the most numerous and poor has passed. Saint Simon contemplated the entire history of humanity from the point of view of the progressive amelioration of the material and moral condition of the proletariat. And there can be no doubt that he thus gave a most beneficial impulse to historical investigation and speculation. One of the greatest of Auguste Comte's services as an historical philosopher was, it seems to me, the ingenuity and ability with which he made manifest how the industrial movement in pervading universal history had acted on, and corresponded to, the scientific, æsthetic, moral, and religious movements. Had his exposition of social dynamics possessed even no other merit than this, it would, I think, have amply entitled him to a very distinguished place among those who have laboured to ascertain the course and laws of social development. The historical school of political economy arose in Germany in the fourth decade of the present century; and its principles as set forth by Roscher, Hildebrand, and Knies, rapidly gained wide acceptance in the Fatherland. The writers of this school regarded economics as the theory of the laws of the economic development of nations—the "Philosophie der Wirthschaftsgeschichte." Such a view is an exaggeration; but, unquestionably, we owe to it a multitude of researches which have vastly increased our knowledge of almost all periods of economic history, as well as of the history of almost all economic conceptions and opinions. There is no longer any danger that the changes which have occurred in the production and distribution of wealth at different epochs, and their social effects, will fail to attract the attention of historians, or will be left out of account by historical theorists. Industrial evolution during the last hundred years has been so marvellous in itself, and has so affected the whole course and transformed the whole character of the world of humanity, as to have rendered interesting the industrial history of all peoples and ages.

It is sufficient merely to refer to a large group of studies or sciences which are obviously and directly auxiliary to history. Such are geography, chronology, archæology, linguistics, criticism, and hermeneutics. Without an adequate mastery of these it is impossible to become a successful historian. They are partly the materials and partly the tools of the historian; and alike as materials and tools, they are indispensable to him. The study of history cannot be more advanced than their condition permits. For example, before the histories of Brahmanism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, could be ascertained, their original documents had to be read, and before that could be done, Sanscrit, Pali, and Zend had to be acquired. The primary sources of a knowledge of Egyptian and Assyrian history are in hieroglyphic and cuneiform inscriptions, and were unintelligible until these were deciphered and translated. In these cases history had to wait until the work of linguistics was accomplished. But its dependence on criticism has been in recent times not less decisively shown. The fresh sifting of old materials has been found as productive as the discovery of new. For instance, the views of scholars regarding the histories of two of the most important peoples of antiquity—the Romans and the Hebrews—have been, if not completely revolutionised, profoundly altered by the criticism to which their national records have been subjected by Niebuhr, Ewald, and their successors.

Of all kinds of knowledge, however, it is history itself which is in closest contact with the science of history. The science of history is not a something separate from the facts of history, but a something contained in them. The more a man gets into the meaning of them the more he gets into it, and it into him; for it is simply the meaning, the rational interpretation, the knowledge of the true nature and essential relations of the facts. And this is true of whatever species or order the facts may be. Their science is not something separate and distinct from—something over and above—their interpretation, but simply their interpretation. He who knows about any people, epoch, or special development of human nature, how it has come to be what it is, and what it tends to, what causes have given it the character it has, and what its relation is to the

general development of humanity, has attained to the science or philosophy of the history of that people, epoch, or development. It is inaccurate to speak, as is often done, of scientific history as a *kind* of history. Every kind of history is scientific which is true and thorough; which goes closely and deeply enough to work; which shows the what, how, and why of events as far as reason and research can ascertain them.

History always participates in some measure of philosophy; for events are always connected according to some real or ideal principle, either of efficient or final causation. The dullest mind can only describe them on that condition; the most confused mind must have some sort of reason of selection, and any sort of reason followed out will lead to some sort of philosophy. The more the mind of the historian is awake and active, the more, of course, it is impelled to go in search of the connections between causes and effects, between occurrences and tendencies. The longer any portion of history is studied, the greater the number of minds attracted to its consideration, the more frequently it is worked through and thought over, the richer in reason it is found to be, the more of order and law, of permanent forces, of general features, of pervading spirit and principles, it discloses. And this is just equivalent to saying that as historical research and reflection advance, historical science naturally and necessarily arises; that history surely, although slowly, and, as it were, of itself, leads up to the philosophy of history; that in each new epoch of its own development it must become more philosophical, more conscious of the principles which regulate the succession of human affairs, and at once more comprehensive and definite in the apprehension of the character, causation, and significance of all past transactions.

It seems to follow that some indication should here be given of the stages through which historiography has passed from its origin to the time when our own narrative begins—*i.e.*, when the philosophy of history commenced to be cultivated as a special department of knowledge in the chief nations of Europe. The sketch will be very brief, and it will be delineated entirely with reference to the particular end in view.

III.

History, we may be certain, did not begin by describing events. That was a task to which in infancy her powers were incompetent, and her resources insufficient. She must long have been confined to the mere indication of events by simple helps to memory, or rude symbols. Literature made its first appearance as verse, and in alliance with music. In the dawn of literature the man of genius sang what he had to say, and his words thus winged for far and long flight needed neither chisel nor pen to give them enduring publicity. Poetry preceded prose, and among the oldest forms of poetry were the ballad and the epic. In these, historical elements were often present, but rarely, if ever, in a pure form. The myth and legend interest primitive man more than real fact. His vision is more largely of the imagination than of the sense or judgment. It is an error to regard the rude minstrelsy which has everywhere long preceded the use of letters as essentially historical. For the supposition of Buckle that, until corrupted by the discovery of the art of writing, such minstrelsy is "not only founded on truth, but strictly true," there is no shadow of evidence. Nothing seems more easy, but few things are more difficult, than to look naturally at historical fact so as to see it just as it is. The power to do this is not a gift of nature, but a result of culture, and no race or nation has possessed it until it reached intellectual maturity. The poetry most akin to historical composition attained a wonderful excellence among various peoples long before they had histories even of the meanest order. India can boast of the Rámáyana and Mahábhárata, but is without an historical literature. Greece had Homer long before Herodotus appeared. Italy had Dante long before Guicciardini and Machiavelli. In the dramas of Shakespeare a skill was displayed in the portrayal of character and situations which has never been equalled before or since: and yet, at least until the age of Charles II., English historians were almost wholly lacking in art of the kind. Only slowly could the intellect of antiquity free itself from the fetters of tradition, myth, and rhyme, so as to be able to

deal with historical materials in a natural, truthful, and living manner.

The most ancient known nations, notwithstanding the general height of civilisation to which they attained, failed to rise to eminence in the art of historiography, even when they assiduously practised it. The Egyptians and Assyrians wrote an enormous amount of history of a kind, and among both peoples it was history of much the same kind. Differing in many respects, these great monarchies yet had—in the dependence of enormous populations on a central individual will, the existence of a learned class, the concentration of population in vast and crowded cities, and other characteristics and wants of the civil and political life inseparable from every extensive empire of a despotic type—enough in common to account for the antiquity and authenticity of such historical records as they possess: royal genealogies, registers of military expeditions, and treaties, lists of tribute, accounts of remarkable events and exploits, court chronicles, and laudations of kings. But the very circumstances which originated history at an early date in these empires determined also that it should never rise above the humblest stage,—the dull, dead form of mere registration. It has never been found to flourish even in the modified despotisms of modern times; and it was impossible that it should develop itself with any vigour on a soil unfertilised by any living springs of national feeling, and in the withering atmosphere of ancient oriental tyranny. History of the kind found in these countries is, accordingly, both very superficial and very narrow. It is very superficial, because, occupied only with the outward acts and fortunes of a few ruling men, and satisfied with the mere statement of certain public events severed from their causes, it makes no attempt to understand the character, the conditions, the social development of the people or nation itself. It is very narrow, because, in addition to being thus exclusively conversant with a small class or caste of persons in the nation, and with what affects their interests, it wholly fails to realise that any other nation can have historical significance. A spirit of intense exclusiveness and unlimited pride pervades it, and often finds undisguised expression. The monarchs were in their own eyes and those of their subjects veritable gods on earth.

As against the one nation held to be favoured of heaven, neighbouring peoples were not recognised to have any claims to independence, respect, or benevolence. Alike in Assyria and Egypt hypotheses or speculations were current as to the origin of the world and of man, as to the great divisions of time, reigns of gods, demigods, and human beings, as to the destruction of the present order of things, and the rise of a new cycle of existence; but they were not to any appreciable extent generalisations from the study of actual history. They were almost entirely deductions from mythical, philosophical, and astronomical premises.

The Chinese have undoubtedly surpassed all other great oriental peoples in the department of historical literature. To this result their rare sense for the realities of common life, their reverence for ancestors and antiquity, their comparative lack of imagination, their moderation of judgment, political good sense, and social virtues, and their high appreciation and diligent pursuit of learning and culture, have all contributed. No people can boast of so lengthened and strictly continuous a series of historical writers; since for upwards, apparently, of 2600 years a tribunal has been established in the capital expressly for the recording of events supposed to be of national importance. The mass of Chinese literature is immense. It includes the histories of particular dynasties, annals or chronological summaries, complete records or general histories, memoirs of many kinds, biographies innumerable, vast historical dictionaries and compilations. It exhibits all ages and aspects of the national life, and much of it is written in a style which commends itself to Chinese taste as admirable. But even Chinese historiography scarcely rises above the stage of annals. It diligently collects and carefully arranges notices of historical fact, but it does not critically test them, and still less does it penetrate into the inner spirit and follow the essential development of the history. It lacks the thoroughness of science and the comprehensiveness of philosophy. It fails to rise to any truly general point of view. It is cultivated only as a nationally useful art; not realised to be the mirror in which humanity can contemplate the reflection of its own nature.

The two most celebrated historians of China, although separ-

ated by twelve centuries, bear the same family name. Szema-Thsian (born about B.C. 145) wrote 'Historical Records' (Sze Ke), a kind of encyclopædia of all that appeared historically noteworthy in the annals of China from the reign of Hwang-te to that of Wo-te—*i.e.*, from about 2697 before the Christian era to the age in which the author lived. He distributed his materials into three divisions, and various subdivisions, yet presented them as far as possible chronologically. Hence his work bears, as has been said, no slight analogy to Henry's 'History of Great Britain,' or the 'Pictorial History of England.' It has served as a model to many subsequent Chinese historians, is regarded with admiration by native critics, and has been highly commended by such eminent European authorities as Schott and Remusat. Szema-Kwang, often styled the "Prince of Literature," flourished in the eleventh century of our era, and produced the 'Universal Mirror for Rulers' (Tsze Che Tung Këen). It describes a period of 1362 years, and flows on, in the main, as a single continuous stream of narrative. It has been the most popular of Chinese histories. It has been often added to, and with the additions bringing the record onwards to the eighteenth century, it was translated into French by Father Mailla, and published by Grosier and Le Roux in 12 vols., 1777-83.

The Japanese have been, like the Chinese, liberally endowed with the historical spirit. The present royal race is held by native historians to have reigned since the sixth century before the commencement of the Christian era, and is undoubtedly the oldest in existence. Whether Japanese historiography was of native origin, or wholly evoked under Chinese influence, is a disputed question; as also how far back its earliest authentic notices go. The European specialists, who are presumably more critical than the native scholars, seem now generally to hold that authentic Japanese history does not go farther back than the beginning of the sixth century, A.D. The oldest Japanese work, the *Kojiki* (Records of Ancient Matters), was completed in A.D. 712. This work, which has been translated by Basil Hall Chamberlain ('Transactions of the Royal Asiatic Society of Japan,' vol. x., Appendix), is of exceptional interest, both as being the most ancient extant literary monument of what is

called the Turanian, or Altaic, or Scythian race, and as the least adulterated expression of the mythology and legendary story of ancient Japan; but I have not been able to see anything in it which looks like authentic history. The *Nihongi* (Chronicles of Japan), completed A.D. 720, is a work of similar character, but much more affected by Chinese influence. In the eighth and ninth centuries, what are known as the 'Six National Records' were composed by a number of writers, of whom Sigwara Michizane has left the highest reputation. From the tenth to the thirteenth century there was a marked advance in the art of historical composition and the power of historical reflection. Throughout the whole of the Japanese feudal period, however, as in the European feudal period, although there were numerous chroniclers there were very few historians in the stricter sense of the term. Near its close there appeared a vast and celebrated historical work, the *Dai Nihonshi.* It was composed by the Prince of Mito (1622-1700), aided by many Japanese and Chinese scholars. It covered the whole ground of Japanese history down to 1413. The aim of the prince was to discredit the Shoguns as unrighteous usurpers, and to exalt the Mikado as the sole source of legitimate and beneficent authority; and his work was so skilfully adapted to its end, and produced so powerful an effect, that he may be regarded, as Mr Satow has said, "as the real author of the movement which culminated in the revolution of 1868."

The first Japanese author who attempted to raise history to the rank of a science, or to form a philosophy of history, was Arai Hakuseki (1657-1725). He is regarded by his countrymen as having been unsurpassed by any thinker of their nation in originality, comprehensiveness, and profundity; as an eminent scholar, a statesman of the noblest type, and a creative genius in the department of political economy. His *Tokushi Yorom* is, says Professor Griffis, "a most valuable philosophical view of the different changes which have taken place at various times in the distribution of the governing power in Japan." The greatest Japanese historian, however, would appear to have been Rai Sanjo (1780-1833). He is acknowledged to have been careful and critical in research, and of penetrating insight in the interpretation of events. It is impossible to read even the

extracts which have been translated from his works without being impressed by his power of graphic and dramatic presentation. He was obviously a man of rare genius. It is interesting to observe that, although writing in the present century, he, like Thucydides and Livy, puts speeches of his own composing into the mouths of the personages brought before us in his works.

Modern Japan can boast of a truly native school of historical criticism. The most remarkable treatises which have proceeded from it are those of Motoōri Norinaga (1730-1801), and of Hirata Atsutane (1776-1843), relating to the ancient national chronicles. Of that of Motoōri, an account has been given by Professor Severini; but notwithstanding its intrinsic interest, it would be irrelevant to treat here of a work first published during the last century. A conspicuous peculiarity of Japanese literature is the multitude of its historical romances, many of them dating from the tenth and eleventh centuries.[1]

India presents us with a far richer and finer literary development than any of the nations already mentioned,—its poetry and philosophy, in particular, being exceedingly remarkable. But the unparalleled mixture of races contained from a remote antiquity within it, the utter want of any extensive political unity, the genius and character of its leading people, and their external and social conditions, were all unfavourable to the rise of historical composition; and the Hindus have no ancient native histories. They have known how to give true and full expression to the innermost workings of their minds, and have faithfully delineated all the features of their character, in the Vedas, the Code of Manu, the Puranas, the Sutras of their philosophers, and especially in their two great national epics. But they have neglected and despised the events of their outer and social life, and allowed the memory of them to be to all appearance hopelessly lost. Nothing seems less promising than

[1] Any opinion which I have been able to form of Japanese historical writings rests, of course, on translations, such as we owe to Rosny, Mitford, Satow, Aston, Chamberlain, Valenziani, Severini, and other experts. The only general printed view of Japanese historiography with which I am acquainted is that contained in the very instructive article of Professor Griffis on Japan (Language and Literature of) in the 'American Cyclopædia,' vol. ix.; but I have had a fuller list of the historians, with notes as to their characteristics, kindly furnished me by a Japanese friend, Mr Korehiro Kurahara.

the attempt to separate historical fact from poetical fiction, either according to Lassen's ingenious process of symbolism and interpretation, or Wheeler's naively simple process of selection and reduction. Notwithstanding the extraordinary clearness and subtilty displayed by the Hindu intellect on some subjects—*e.g.*, grammar—it scarcely succeeded in distinguishing history from epic poetry. The oldest Hindu compositions which can by any possibility be classed as historical, date only from the eleventh century of our era, and are of a merely *quasi*-historical character. The best known of them—the one translated by I. Chunder Dutt, under the title of 'Kings of Kâshmîra'—is more poetical and fabulous than historical. Of greater historical value, perhaps, are some family chronicles, and especially Bilhana's 'Vikra-mānkadevacarita,' belonging to the eleventh century, and recently discovered and edited by Bühler. But the native historical literature of India is sparse and poor in the extreme. It was impossible for a people so ignorant of history to have any true philosophy of history.

Israel had a unique history which has been recorded in a unique manner. The historical books of the Old Testament, and their constituent portions, vary in their characteristics and qualities, but they form a whole, and as such they are incomparably superior to those of any other Asiatic people. Those of them which relate to the primeval history of man and to the origins of the Hebrew nation are now generally held by the scholars, whose opinions are based entirely on critical and evidential considerations, to have been elaborated into their present shape after the prophets had taught, so that their exhibition of the history is also an ideal construction of it, in accordance with the principles which the prophets had promulgated, but which it was left to the priests and scribes to apply. This view of their formation—of which Reuss and Kuenen, Wellhausen and Stade, have been among the most prominent advocates—does not deprive them of any of those rare merits, either of contents or form, for which they justly claim our admiration. The unity, consistency, naturalness, moral elevation, and spiritual instructiveness of the presentation of history given in the ancient Hebrew literature, are facts which cannot be denied, however they may have been attained. It

reflected with wonderful faithfulness and completeness the theocratic life of Israel, of which it was an outcome. It was pervaded by a profound sense of a supernatural presence, and of an eternal law making for righteousness. All events were exhibited in it from the religious point of view, God being set forth as the supreme factor of history, His will as the standard of historical judgment, and His kingdom as the goal of historical development. Yet human nature is also skilfully and truthfully delineated, in a style almost always simple and natural, often vivid and strong, and at times pathetic and sublime. Characters and situations the most varied are strikingly described. Man appears nowhere more man than where God is represented as miraculously at his side.

History has been defined as the biography of nations, but the Jewish histories so delineate the various stages and fortunes through which "the peculiar people" passed, from its origin onwards, that they read like the successive chapters of an autobiography. The feeling of their own national significance, which the Jews possessed in so singular a degree, and which they so carefully cherished, was grounded in their view of history, which had consequently the most vital interest for them. Probably no people has ever been more thoroughly conscious of being rooted in, and of growing out of, a marvellous past. And this historical self-consciousness was accompanied with a sense of relationship to other peoples such as had not been previously displayed. The national exclusiveness of the Jews, as compared with European peoples, either ancient or modern, is an undoubted fact; but it should not conceal this other fact, that it is among them that the conviction of the unity of the race, of the filiation of all the peoples of the world, and of a common and hopeful final destiny, are first found prevailing; and that among them, on the basis of these convictions, history first rises from being particular to being universal. We have, it is true, the history of the Jews, as of a nation under a special discipline and with a special mission, minutely narrated, but it is exhibited as only an offshoot of the history of humanity; and if the Jews thought the twig greater than the tree, or if Christian writers have spoken as if they also thought so, the original historians are not to blame.

History as it is in the Bible, however, is not mere history, but much more than history. It exists not for its own sake, but for the sake of something higher, of which it is represented as merely the medium and manifestation. It may thus be said to be as history, a stage of transition from lower to higher, which in no degree interrupts the progress or violates the order of development in this kind of composition. It contained what was far more precious than anything Greece possessed; and yet, looked at from another side, it fell short of, and only led up to, history as we find it among the Greeks, who in this, as in so many other provinces of intellectual activity, asserted an unmistakable pre-eminence, an unparalleled originality.

On the classic soil of ancient Hellas history first attained the dignity of an independent art, first was cultivated for its own sake. It is what the Lord said, and the Lord did, that the Scripture history chiefly aims to exhibit,—it is His guidance of a particular nation in an essentially special way that is its subject,—whereas the historians of Greece set before themselves for end simply the satisfaction of man's curiosity as to the actions of his fellow-men. "These are the researches of Herodotus of Halicarnassus which he publishes, in order to preserve from decay the remembrance of what men have done, and to prevent the great and marvellous actions of the Greeks and barbarians losing their due meed of glory, as well as to state the causes of their hostility." "Thucydides of Athens wrote the history of the war between the Athenians and Peloponnesians while it was going on, having begun to write from its commencement in the belief that it would turn out great, and worthier of being recorded than any which had preceded it." The oriental world had no histories written from these simple natural motives, which are, however, those distinctively appropriate to the historical art. That art, therefore, as its own true self, as a free and separate form of literature, and not the mere appendage or offshoot of something else, first grew out of the soil of Greek culture, and after a period of barrenness and dryness, blossomed and ripened into the immortal works of Herodotus and Thucydides. There it attained a perfection of form which has perhaps never since been surpassed. Herodotus, with all his credulity and want

of criticism, is, through the wonderful fulness and perennial freshness of his information, through his transparent candour and simplicity of spirit, his ease of narration, vividness of portraiture, pathos and humour, the very type and model of one great class of historians; and Thucydides, by his accuracy of investigation, intense realisation and austerely graphic representation of events, and especially by his deep insight into the working of political causes and social forces, is almost the ideal and exemplar of another.

The remarkable many-sidedness which characterised the Greek genius, and showed itself at the very origin of Greek literature in Homer in a form which could not again be surpassed, revealed itself in the historical sphere also, worthily repeating itself in Herodotus to gratify the curiosity of the most inquisitive and philosophical of nations. He was without any abstract notion of humanity, or any term to express it, but nothing human was alien or uninteresting to him. He gave due honour and justice to barbarians as well as Greeks, and described with sympathetic zest and care all the aspects and manifestations of human life,—the natural surroundings, the cities, the monuments, the religions, the customs, the laws, the revolutions of the governments and royal dynasties, the wars, exploits, and fortunes of men of all varieties of race and culture. With the genius of a great artist he grouped round a central idea—the struggle between Asiatics and Greeks—a vast mass of the most diverse materials, and composed a grand and symmetrical whole. The historical picture we owe to him is large and attractive, crowded, yet not confused, impressive as a whole, and lifelike and interesting in every part. The comprehensiveness of research, the combined ingenuity and naturalness of arrangement, the merits and charm of style, and the general originality of conception and execution, displayed by Herodotus, well entitled him to be called "the father of history." His chief defects were that he deemed a great deal to be true, for the truth of which he had not sufficient evidence; that his ability to explain events was small in comparison with his power of describing them; and that he lacked insight into the working of general causes, and especially of political forces. The most general point of view from which he contemplated

history was religious, not political. His faith in a divine Providence had not been undermined by speculative thought. It was essentially that of Pindar, Æschylus, and Sophocles. So he saw in history Deity as the chief agent, and moral retribution as the chief law. The god, according to Herodotus, assigns to all things their order—to empires their duration, to crimes due punishment; is inexorably severe towards impiety and perjury, and fails not to disappoint rash haste or to prosper self-restraint; is just, yea jealous, cutting down all towering things, and suffering none but himself to be proud; and intervenes even supernaturally in human affairs through oracles, signs, and prodigies. Such was, in substance, his historical creed.

Thucydides was a contemporary of Herodotus, and only a few years younger. Yet his work when compared with that of Herodotus seems as if it belonged to an altogether different and much later age. This was doubtless chiefly due to the fact that, while Herodotus was a Greek of Asia Minor, Thucydides was an Athenian, when the growth of intellectual life in Athens was amazingly rapid. A decade at Athens in the age of Pericles was equivalent in the history of thought to a very lengthened stretch of ordinary time anywhere else. Thucydides had felt the full power of the critical and sceptical spirit there and then prevalent. To represent him as atheistical or irreligious is unwarranted. But it is plain that he had resolved not to allow any religious faith he may have retained, to colour his historical vision, or influence his historical judgments. He wished to write only authentic, strictly true history. Hence he chose a limited and well-defined field of study which could be thoroughly explored, and where truth could be attained with certainty. He took as his subject the Peloponnesian war, which began in 431 B.C., and he watched and described it as it went on down to the battle of Cynossêma in 411. He rigidly excluded from his narrative whatever did not bear directly on its theme—the struggle between Athens and her allies on the one side, and Sparta and her allies on the other; unlike Herodotus, who drew into his whatever he thought would enhance its popular interest. As an impartial, independent, critical investigator, he stands immeasurably above all preceding

historians, and probably beneath no succeeding one. But it was not merely as a narrator that he excelled. He was equally remarkable for the clearness and depth of his insight into the grounds of the events he described. He did not reason about occurrences, but he so exhibited them as convincingly to disclose their causation and development. The only immediate agents, of course, to be seen in the Peloponnesian war, were the States engaged and the men who composed them. Thucydides confined himself to showing why, in the circumstances in which they were placed, these States and men acted as they did. He could be sure of the operation of these causes—essential human motives and general political interests; and he carefully exhibited their operation. At the same time he saw that they did not explain everything; that history was not wholly self-explaining, but that there was in it more or less of contingency, fortune, fate—of what he called *τύχη*. Beyond this he did not think he was entitled as an historian to go. And so he had nothing to say of the gods, or of their intervention. Too much may easily be expected from Thucydides. He sought only to write political history, and therefore we have no right to look for religious reflections from him, or even for information as to how the intellectual, social, and spiritual life of Greece was affected by the Peloponnesian war. Nor did he undertake to write a history of the general politics of the period, but only of its external politics as involved in the war; and therefore, instead of attempting to give as much information as he could regarding the internal politics of the belligerent States, he gave only as much as was necessary to explain their conduct in relation to one another. So of the chief individual actors in the war, he deemed it no part of his task to characterise them in their private capacities, and hence his delineations of them are apt to seem shadowy and defective, although they are subtantial as far as they go and sufficient for their purpose. He would never have been the almost perfect historian he was if he had not shunned as he did the too much alike in matter and style. It must be allowed that he fell into error, and set a bad example, when he attributed to persons speeches which were wholly or largely composed by himself. Yet these speeches are not only admirable as speeches, but also as means of conveying

ideas of the utmost importance for the understanding of the history. They hold a place in the work of Thucydides not unlike that of the songs of the chorus in a tragedy of Æschylus or Sophocles. They gradually disclose the latent significance of the history, and the views and motives of the various parties engaged in it. They save the author from the necessity and risks of theorising in his own name on the course of events, while yet most effectively and artistically setting forth the conclusions at which he had arrived. At the same time they are not unjust to those to whom they are assigned, but such as might most appropriately have been spoken by them. Thucydides was the first scientific historian. But he was also a great historical artist. His judicial impartiality and calm passionless objectivity of judgment sprang not from insensibility but from conscientiousness and self-restraint. In reading his pages we perceive that he felt as strongly as he conceived clearly. The tone of austere melancholy which pervades his work corresponds perfectly to the tragic nature of the story which is its subject; and we are made to realise all the misery and pathos of that story. His style has nothing of the ease, flow, and sweetness of that of Herodotus; but it is of rare strength and conciseness, moves on rapidly and directly without a useless word or phrase, varies as the occasion requires, and rises at times to the loftiest heights. "It has," to use the words of Professor Jebb, "many faults. It is often involved, abrupt, obscure. But no writer has grander bursts of rugged eloquence, or more of that greatness which is given by sustained intensity of noble thought and feeling."

Thucydides left his history unfinished, and Xenophon attempted to complete it. But his continuation, the 'Hellenica,' is altogether deficient in the great qualities which characterise the work of Thucydides. It is dry, ill arranged, superficial, prejudiced, and even feeble and unattractive in style. The fame of Xenophon as an historian must rest on his 'Anabasis,' and there it may rest securely. No military incident has ever been told with more exquisite simplicity and fascinating art than the Retreat of the Ten Thousand.

It was natural that it should be a Greek who first tried to realise the idea of a universal history. Nevertheless, it could

not be even the most comprehensive-minded Greek of the age of Herodotus or Thucydides when there was no visible unity of any kind in the world, but one who had the spectacle of Rome before his eyes, and who had studied her steady march towards universal empire, as far at least as the period when "the affairs of Italy and Africa conjoined with those of Asia and Greece, and all moved together towards one fixed and single point." Polybius, who spent a portion of his life at Rome, who studied her history closely, and saw clearly that her success was no accident, but the natural results of general causes—her unity, institutions, and character — who beheld her triumph over Carthage and Macedonia, and was fully conscious that his own divided and demoralised land could offer her no resistance—was a Greek so placed, and he was the first to attempt a universal history. He did so with the distinctest perception of its advantages over particular histories, which he tells us "can no more convey a perfect view and knowledge of the whole than a survey of the divided members of a body once endued with life and beauty can yield a just conception of all the comeliness and vigour which it has received from nature." A chief object with him, therefore, was to show by what stages and in what ways each nation had reached its last estate. He assumed that the real had been the rational, and that Rome had become the mistress of the world for the world's good. Being the power best fitted to rule over the nations, Rome had obtained that rule. She was "the noblest and most beneficent work of Fortune," but of a Fortune neither blind nor unjust. Polybius was not a servile flatterer of Rome, but his whole view of history necessarily rendered him an apologist of accomplished facts, and of Roman success. He was like Thucydides in that he endeavoured to exhibit the causes of events; but unlike him in that he was not content to do this in a purely historical manner, but reasoned on them in his own name, and introduced into the history his personal impressions and reflections. For Polybius, as for Thucydides, the motive forces of human nature were the great factors of history. He disbelieved divine interventions in history, and regarded the popular religion as only a superstition useful to awe and frighten the multitude. Thucydides wrote in order that by giving an ac-

curate knowledge of the past he might supply his readers with a clue to that future which, in all human probability, will repeat or resemble the past. Polybius himself drew from the facts he narrated such lessons as he deemed would be of service to politicians. As his work thus combined practical political teaching with an exhibition of events as causes and effects, and so was a course of political instruction conveyed and exemplified through a record of actions, he called it a *πραγματεία*; and he is often described as the originator of pragmatic historiography. By his reflections on the causes of the growth of the power of Rome, he opened up a path afterwards followed by Machiavelli, Bossuet, and Montesquieu. He was perfectly aware of the necessity of attending especially to general causes, and was probably the first to make a serious study of the spirit and history of the Roman constitution. That he fell into errors on the subject was inevitable. It may, however, be doubted if any later writer of the ancient world treated it with deeper insight, or with more accurate knowledge.

The idea of a universal history was, as we have seen, the reflection and result of the universal empire of Rome, which made the known world externally one, a single great political whole. Rome made the world Roman and became herself cosmopolitan. The indebtedness of history to Rome as exemplifying that unity of a universal government, without which there could never have arisen any notion of a universal history, is incalculable. The world came to know external unity only in and through Rome. The universal empire of pagan Rome was the condition and foundation of the universal empire of Catholic Rome, and of such unity as Christendom has retained since the unity of Catholicism was broken. After the Macedonian wars no extraordinary genius was required to discern in the history of the world a unity centring in Rome. How Polybius saw and was impressed by it has already been indicated. Among Latin writers Cornelius Nepos was the first to compose a universal history—*omne ævum explicare.* His work is lost, like several later works of the same kind. None of the general histories written during the empire were productions of much merit. No Latin author showed himself able even intelligently to continue what Polybius had begun. The Roman will made

history universal, but the Roman intellect was deficient in the qualities requisite for treating successfully of universal history. It was not in this department that Roman writers acquired fame as historians.

The pride of the early Romans led them both to falsify their own history and to take some measures to preserve the memory of it. Their registers, their *fasti* and annals, were only meagre and unsatisfactory materials for history. As an art history was late in appearing at Rome. The rude Roman speech was fashioned with difficulty into a literary instrument. A Roman literature was only developed under Greek influences. The conquest of Greece by the arms of Rome was followed by the conquest of Rome by the mind of Greece; and in Roman literature Grecian and Latin qualities were inseparably blended. The first Latin work entitled to be called a history would seem to have been the 'Origines' of Cato. For a considerable time Roman historiography was uncritical and inartistic; and it was from the first affected by a vice which inhered in it to the end —namely, a tendency to subordinate truth to what was supposed to be for the interest of the State, or for the edification of the individual.

Cæsar and Sallust were the first Roman writers who produced works displaying historical genius. The Commentaries of Cæsar on the Gallic and Civil Wars are not only invaluable for the information which they contain, but are composed in a style perfect in its kind and in its relation to the subject. They are an admirable reflection of their author's mind,—one absolutely clear in conception and observation, completely master of itself and of whatever it undertook to deal with, and which moved towards the end it aimed at in the most direct, rapid, and decisive manner. But they are simply military narratives, and cannot entitle Cæsar to a place in the highest rank of historians. Of historical philosophy of any kind, or general historical ideas, they show no trace. Cæsar was far too clear-sighted to state what was false, but no one probably knew better how to make silence serve his purpose, or so to present his facts as to make them suggest what it would hardly have become him to have said. Handling speech with the most masterly ease and naturalness as a practically use-

ful instrument, he wisely dispensed with literary adornment and elaboration.

Hence Sallust may justly be described as the first artistic historian or historical artist of Rome. His Catalinarian Conspiracy and Jugurthine War are small but choice and carefully finished pieces, in which their author's talents alike as historian and *littérateur* are seen to full advantage. In the selection, disposition, and general treatment of his subjects, as also in his style, he took the work of Thucydides for his model. As regards the highest historical qualities, he must be admitted to have fallen much beneath his great exemplar. Yet few who have imitated Thucydides have so nearly equalled him in so many respects, while surpassing him in some. He had neither the originality nor the greatness of Thucydides, neither his conscientiousness and thoroughness as an historical investigator, nor his grasp and penetration as an historical thinker. But he had remarkable skill in combining and disposing facts into pictures, in drawing characters by a few striking traits, and in juxtaposing and contrasting his personages. His moral reflections may be irrelevant, but his talent for moral portraiture was indubitable. He had a power of psychological, and consequently of moral, analysis, almost equal to that of Tacitus, although exercised on a much smaller scale. His works are from their own merits worthy of their reputation; and their relation to those of Thucydides on the one side, and to those of Tacitus on the other, give them a special interest for a student of the development of historiography.

But it was neither in the sphere of universal nor of episodical history that the Latin historians performed their most distinctive work. It was in that of national history. The men who founded Rome's greatness, who won for her by endurance and daring the empire of the world, were not men of broad but of narrow ideas, not of liberal but of exclusive feelings, men animated by a proud, absorbing, ruthless patriotism. It was through the strength of their national feeling that the Romans gained the universal empire in which they lost it; and, as a general rule, when the classical scholar thinks of Roman history it is not as leading to even an imperfect recognition of human brotherhood—to a sense of something generic in man, of a

common nature in virtue of which all men are entitled to certain legal and moral rights—but as displaying the features of a national character of singular strength and interest. And certainly in that respect the Roman historians have a very special claim to our attention. The Greeks were not patriotic in the same sense and degree as the Romans. And Herodotus and Thucydides are not national historians in the same sense and degree as Livy and Tacitus. Indeed, Livy and Tacitus might, with little exaggeration, be described as the two first national historians on a large and prominent scale, and who, it may be added, had as such no worthy successors for sixteen hundred years.

Livy narrated the events of Rome's career of heroic struggle and achievement with the colouring and in the tone most adapted to inspire the youth of his own generation with reverence and emulation of their ancestors. He was the greatest prose writer of his age. He narrated with unfailing vividness, sensibility, and charm, and could picture or portray with masterly vigour and skill. His ethical feeling was keen and pure. Patriotism was his strongest passion. And if the chief end of history be, as he obviously supposed, to supply examples and *stimuli* to virtue and patriotism, he certainly cannot be accused of having neglected the historian's main function. His whole work, as has been said, was "a triumphal celebration of the heroic spirit and military glory of Rome." It was natural that he should have been the most popular of the Roman historians. But unfortunately his great qualities were combined with great defects. He was superficial in research; easily satisfied in regard to evidence; prone to take the version of a story which told best; uncritical in the choice and use of authorities. Dazzled by the splendour of the military history of Rome, he neglected the study of its constitutional history. He lacked political insight. He lacked still more philosophical comprehension. Of the general conditions and causes which determined the course of Roman history, and of any law or plan in it, he had no glimpse. He was merely an annalist, although the most attractive and brilliant of annalists. Seneca (Ep. 100) tells us that Livy wrote "dialogos, quos non magis philosophiæ adnumerare possis quam historiæ, et ex professo philosophiam

continentes libros." Whatever the character of the former may have been, we may be certain that the subject of them was not, as Rougemont has supposed, the philosophy of history. If he had had any conception of a philosophy of history he could not have written a history so devoid of philosophy.

Tacitus was very unlike Livy in almost all respects, but as an historian he was like him in so far that his aim too was essentially moral and patriotic. The darkness without was deeper, however, and the hope within less. With the tragic pathos of a despairing patriot and the righteous indignation of an honest man, he delineated the growth of social corruption from the time of Tiberius onwards, in order to deter those in whom any sense of moral obligation was left from what had involved a people so strong and virtuous, so glorious and free as the Roman, in such misery and disgrace, such revolting vice and abject slavery. No historian has given so large a place to the moral element in history, yet without ever becoming a mere moralist or ceasing to be an historian. No one has shown with the same power and vividness what moral law and retribution, virtue and vice and their concomitants and consequences, are in actual historical manifestation and evolution, or traced with so masterly a hand the connections between individual character and the character of public rule. His strong moral feelings may have given rise in certain cases to harsh judgments; but obviously they were, in general, under such firm control, that this must be deemed only a possibility, and in no particular instance assumed as a fact, or even as a probability. From what he knew of the corruption of the governing classes of Rome he may have drawn inferences as to the corruption of the whole social body which are not to be accepted without corroborative evidence, or which can be even proved exaggerated; but it is easy to attribute to Tacitus errors of this kind, which are really only mistakes of the reader's own, consequent on his not keeping in view the precise limits and scope of the two chief works of Tacitus. Notwithstanding his extraordinary intellectual power, Tacitus attained no settled convictions on which any general philosophy of history, or even any general conceptions of history, could be rested. He had obviously no confidence either in any metaphysical or religious theory of

things. His moral sense often breaks down his doubts, and impels him to affirm divine intervention, but his reason was not of the kind which carries the mind above what is visible and concrete or positive. He confessed himself undecided as to whether human affairs are governed by Providence, or fate and inevitable necessity, or the wild rotation of chance. He made no attempt to forecast the future either of humanity or of the empire. Yet he is justly entitled to be regarded as a scientific or philosophical historian, inasmuch as he traced actions back to their motives, events to their causes, and penetrated to the secret springs of social change. In the analysis of character he surpassed all the historians of antiquity. Full of matter as his narrative is, it never contains anything trivial or superfluous. His style fitly exhibits the force, originality, and dignity of his mind. His words are singularly pregnant with meaning, and few of them could either be omitted or replaced by another without loss. He was unquestionably far the most eminent of the Roman historians.

The growth of Roman historiography had been slow ; its decay was rapid. After the greatest of Roman historians there appeared not a single great one. Even writers like Suetonius and Florus have no claim to a place in this sketch. We must pass onwards, therefore, into the Christian world.

The political unity of the Roman empire contributed both by its advantages and defects to prepare the mind for belief in the spiritual unity of humanity proclaimed by Christianity. The Gospel of Christ, with its new views of God and of man and of their relationship to each other, proved to be the germ of a new world, vaster and more wonderful than that ruled by the Cæsars. It did not preserve the Roman empire from dissolution, or arrest the decay of Roman literature ; it failed to inspire a strong patriotism or to produce a high civic virtue ; it added not a single author worthy of mention to the number of Roman historians. But it leavened society, created the Church, and caused religion to be felt as one of the most powerful factors of history. It made men conscious, as they had never been before, that they were spiritual as well as political beings, and even more spiritual than political beings ; that spiritual life was the most important form of life. Sustained by this consciousness

the Church grew stronger as the empire grew weaker, and remained, when the political unity of Rome was shattered, to represent and uphold religious unity,—to remind separate and hostile nations that they were members of a common humanity and subject to the laws of a divine kingdom,—and, it must be added, strenuously to endeavour to make the kingdoms of the earth submissive to its own will and subservient to its own interests.

Christianity by creating the Church enormously enlarged and enriched history. It thereby opened up a central and exhaustless vein in the mine of human nature,—set in movement a main stream in the flow of human affairs. The rise of ecclesiastical history was more to historiography than was the discovery of America to geography. It added immensely to the contents of history, and radically changed men's conceptions of its nature. It at once caused political history to be seen to be only a part of history, and carried even into the popular mind the conviction—of which hardly a trace is to be found in the classic historians—that all history must move towards some general human end, some divine goal.

Ecclesiastical historiography was first cultivated in the Greek Church. The author of the Acts of the Apostles and Hegesippus led the way. Eusebius (264-340) gained the title of Father of Church History. His 'Ecclesiastical History' began with the incarnation of Christ, and ended with the triumph of the Church by the help and favour of Constantine. It recounted the successions of the apostles, the calamities of the Jews, the persecutions and martyrdoms of Christians, the services of eminent ecclesiastics, the heresies and controversies, and, in a word, the chief transactions and varying conditions of the Church during the first 324 years of its existence. The work was well conceived, judiciously planned, and laboriously executed. Although largely annalistic and often loosely constructed, it forms on the whole a unity. Its materials are of themselves sufficient to give it a priceless value. They are drawn almost entirely from Greek sources, and so the work conveys little information as to the Latin Churches. Eusebius was not a great writer, and to call him, as has often been done, "the Christian Herodotus," is more apt to suggest his inferiority than likeness

to the heathen one. He was as devoid of the incomparable art of the son of Lyxes, as of his simplicity and richness of nature. He lived in a time when life was artificial and diseased, and although he had many good qualities, intellectual and moral, he belonged too truly to his time. He was a courtier bishop, wanting in strength and reality of character, in singleness of heart, vision, and speech. He was honest, but not impartial. He loved religion better than truth, and conceived of religion in a worldly way. It is easy to explain and even to excuse his faults; it is a duty gratefully to acknowledge his services to the cause of Christian learning; but it is difficult to respect and impossible to admire him. The defects of his character have left deep traces in his historical works. It is unnecessary here to notice his 'Life of Constantine.' But his 'Chronicle,' based on a chronological labour of Julius Africanus, undoubtedly deserves mention. It consists of an epitome of universal history, followed by chronological tables which exhibit in parallel columns the successions of the rulers of different nations, accompanied with indications of the years of the more remarkable events. It was thus the expression of the conception of history implied in the claim of Christianity to be the end of all past ages of divine revelation, and of human search and desire. The position accorded by the Christian Church to the historical books of the Old Testament of necessity profoundly affected the mode of viewing history. It caused what had been deemed general history by the classical historians to be considered only a kind of partial or particularist history, and the history of the human race as a whole to be the only truly general history. The Christian historian or annalist felt bound to look back to the creation, to trace the special histories of the different nations as divisions of one comprehensive history, and, by the help of a chronology, derived chiefly from Biblical data, to determine how the special histories synchronised. In this there was manifest gain to historiography. The underlying thought was the great one that the history of man was a divinely ordered system, beginning with Adam, centring in Christ, and closing in a day of judgment. The result was an immediate and decisive transcendence of the particularism in the treatment of history characteristic of the classical authors.

But there was loss as well as gain. The Hebrew historians were regarded as above criticism. A chronology deduced from texts deemed inspired and infallible was arbitrarily imposed on the histories of the heathen nations. A false persuasion of knowledge as to primeval times was engendered. A view of universal history was formed, specious enough to gain unquestioning acceptance until a recent period, but unable to satisfy the demands of strict criticism and inconsistent with the results which research has at length attained. The Chronology of Eusebius was soon translated into Latin and Armenian, and often both abridged and continued. It was the basis of all the chronological work undertaken in medieval Christendom.

Eusebius had several "continuators" in the Eastern Church —*e.g.*, Theodoret, Socrates, and Sozomen in the fifth century, and Theodorus and Evagrius in the sixth. Those named all showed care and diligence in the collection of information and considerable general sobriety and vigour of intellect, but also a credulous faith in divine interpositions. After the sixth century the Greek Church ceased to be productive in historiography, or in any other department of knowledge.

Rufinus and Jerome made the historical works of Eusebius known to the Latin Church. Augustine, in his 'De Civitate Dei,' attempted, with all the energy and resources of his magnificent genius, to explain the facts and secrets of history by the principles of Christian theology, and expounded a theory of the destinies of the human race which served many generations as their only philosophy of history. What may be called in a lax and general way the Augustinian philosophy of history was substantially the only one known in medieval Europe; and it has reappeared in modern times with more or less important modifications under the hands of Bossuet, Schlegel, and many others. As it will be specially treated of in the last section of our Introduction, this mere reference to it must here suffice.

The Spanish presbyter, Paulus Orosius, wrote his 'Historiarum libri vii. adversus paganos,' at the suggestion of Augustine, and in reply to the same charges against Christianity and Christians which are combated in the 'De Civitate Dei.' The chief merit of the work is its endeavour after comprehensiveness. It gives

a history of the world from the creation to the year A.D. 410. Its central thought is that God has raised up and cast down kingdoms, distributed happiness and misery, and disposed all human affairs, with a view to the spread and triumph of Christianity. This gives it whatever elevation of tone and unity of plan it possesses. The polemical and practical purpose to which it owed its origin is never lost sight of, and so it abounds in denunciations of ambition, conquest, and idolatry, and in moral advice and spiritual consolation. It adds nothing to the historical theory of Augustine. Ozanam finds in it " un véritable talent, quelquefois ce souffle inspiré du génie Espagnol," which I am unable to discover. Doergens (' Aristoteles,' p. 12) designates its author—" der erste Philosoph der Geschichte." This is altogether unwarranted. No one has a right to distribute blue ribbons in such a way. Great titles ought to be conferred only on great men and for great services. Orosius was no historical philosopher at all,—no philosopher of any kind.

Amidst the confusion and destruction caused by the barbarian invasions and the downfall of the Western empire, historiography like all other literature, nearly disappeared. Men had not the heart to describe events which filled them with despair. All culture decayed until only the bare rudiments of knowledge remained. The historical art of medieval Europe began, as that of Greece and Rome had begun, with the rude and simple chronicle. Yet there was a most important difference between the cases. When history began to be recorded in Greece and Rome, the Greeks and Romans had become unconscious of their connection with the past of the human race,—with a history preceding and underlying their own. It was not so with medieval Europe. Its continuity with the past, and the sense thereof, were unsundered; both the classical and the Christian traditions were retained in its memory. The new cycle was thus, even at the commencement, unlike as well as like the old one; and hence, however analogous to it it might prove to be, it could never possibly be a repetition of it. Besides, the materials of history were in the medieval period immensely increased by the new peoples destined to become new nations, and by the new institutions and forms of life destined, after absorption or commingling

with the old, to be evolved into a political and social system profoundly different from the Roman, inasmuch as it was far more extensive and complex, far more spiritually rich, highly developed, and manifoldly productive.

The fierce minds of the barbarians were softened and subdued by the persuasions and terrors of the Church. The Christian clergy became the teachers and rulers of the nations which arose on the ruins of the fallen empire. Art or culture had been the dominant fact in Greek life, and positive law or policy in Roman life; religion or piety as understood by the Church was made the dominant fact in medieval life. Literature in all its branches became predominantly religious, and religious in its specially medieval, that is, ecclesiastical form. Ecclesiastical histories outnumbered all other histories. Biographies of saints, bishops, and popes, histories of single convents and monastic orders, &c., abounded; and even general or political histories were, with few exceptions, written by ecclesiastics and on ecclesiastical principles. Indeed, no sharp or marked distinction was drawn between ecclesiastical and general or political history, for the Church in these times intervened directly and powerfully in all affairs. The distinction deemed fundamental in the medieval period was not that between Church and State, but that between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of the world—the *civitas Dei* and *civitas diaboli* of Augustine; and as men obeyed or disobeyed the Church, as affairs were favourable or adverse to the Church, they were regarded, at least by almost all Churchmen, as belonging to the one kingdom or the other.

The mass of historical writing in Latin left by the ecclesiastics of the middle age is enormous. The best portion of it is contained in the vast collections of Græevius, Muratori, Bouquet, Migne, Guizot, Pertz, and the Master of the Rolls. Much more of it has seen the light in the publications of local learned societies. Much of it is still unpublished. To those who would make a special study of it, Potthast[1] and Chevallier[2] may serve as general guides. Surveys have been made of special

[1] Potthast (A)—Bibliotheca Historica Medii Aevi. Berlin, 1862.

[2] Chevallier (U)—Répertoire des sources historiques du moyen âge. Paris, 1877-84.

sections of it, as by Wattenbach[1] and Lorenz.[2] There is still wanting, however, a comprehensive account of medieval historiography. My purpose requires me only to refer to a very few of the most representative writers and productions.

Gregory of Tours, who died in 594, may fitly come first. As his 'Historia Francorum' is the chief original source of information for the Merovingian period, he is often called the father of French history; but, of course, the title is ambiguous, and by the unlearned apt to be misunderstood. In a small and feeble body he bore a large and strong soul, and played his part bravely and skilfully in fearful and difficult times. His 'Historia Francorum' is in ten books. The first, beginning with the creation of Adam and Eve, and ending with the death of St Martin of Tours, is of no special worth. The second treats of the Frankish conquest, and is drawn to a considerable extent from works now lost. The third and fourth deal with events down to 574, two years after Gregory had become bishop, and are also comparatively meagre. The later books are much fuller; indeed, the last four are occupied with a period of only seven years. Gregory was not in the least a literary artist. He was quite conscious of a defective acquaintance with grammar. "Veniam precor," he says, "si aut in litteris, aut in syllabis grammaticam artem excessero, de qua adplene non sum imbutus" ('Hist. Fr.' iv. 1). His style was rude, unformed, disjointed, without force, precision, or elegance, but at times not devoid of a certain realistic vividness. Of aptness in arrangement, skill in proportioning parts to one another and the whole, or judicious subordination of local to general, and insignificant to important details, his work shows no traces. He was far from unprejudiced in judgment, or critical in his appreciation of evidence. He was a credulous believer in miracles, and thought very leniently of monstrous crimes if committed by orthodox princes, very severely of heresy or hostility to the Church; but he was honest and earnest according to his light, and showed himself so by the ingenuousness, candour, and fulness of his statements of fact.

[1] Wattenbach (W)—Deutschland's Geschichtsquellen im Mittelalter bis zur Mitte des xiii. Jahrhunderts. 4° Aufl. Berlin, 1877-78.

[2] Lorenz (O)—Deutschland's Geschichtsquellen im Mittelalter seit der Mitte des xiii. Jahrhunderts. 3° Aufl. Berlin, 1886.

He made no attempt to analyse characters and actions, to trace the causes of events, to explain the course, tendencies, and issues of human affairs. His horizon was very limited, and all within it was drifting and confused, seething and storm-tossed. The historical world around him was not one in which he could truly see order, and therefore, the best thing he could do, probably, was to describe it in all the disorder in which he saw it, instead of vainly trying to find order in, or force order upon, it. He was devoid both of historical philosophy and of historical art, but he has preserved a rich store of materials for the historical philosophy and art of later times.

Bede (Baeda) was born about one hundred and thirty years after Gregory of Tours. Both his character and surroundings were very different from those of the first historian of the Franks. He spent a studious, pious, peaceful life in the monastries of Wearmouth and Jarrow. It closed with a beautiful death in 735. He acquired mastery over all the scholarship and science of his age, and composed treatises and tracts on a wonderful variety of subjects. Burke has aptly called him "the father of English learning." Much the most important of his works is the one which here concerns us, the 'Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum.' Its five books embrace the period from Caesar's invasion to 731. It begins to be of value with the arrival of Augustine in 597, and still more with that of Paulinus in 630. It gives a deeply interesting and most trustworthy account of the way in which the Saxons in England were Christianised, and also a large amount of precious information as to events which would now be called secular. For a considerable portion of the time to which it relates, it is contemporary history. It shows a diligence in the collection of materials, and a conscientiousness in the use of them, worthy of all praise. Bede was so judicious in the selection of his informants that much of what he tells us on the authority of others is not less to be credited than what he tells us on his own. His carefulness to let his readers know who the authorities for his statements are, makes his honesty obvious even when he is most manifestly in error. Thus, although he never seems to have thought of doubting the occurrence of a miracle vouched for by a man whose character he esteemed, as he seldom or never fails

to mention on whose testimony he relies, no ground is left for suspicion in regard to his own veracity even when under the influence of superstition. Most of what is known of the century and a half of English history after the arrival of Augustine is wholly derived from Bede. Later annalists and historians treating of the same period have only repeated or amplified and altered his statements. The superiority of his work to that of Gregory of Tours as regards literary qualities is very marked. It is a true whole, although occasionally the connection of its parts is loose and the arrangement is determined by external suggestions. Its style is clear, flowing, attractive, suitable to the subject, and a natural reflection of the writer's mind. Particular incidents are often admirably presented. Bede was certainly not an historical philosopher, but he was as certainly an historical artist of very considerable merit. It may be added, that in his 'De ratione temporum' he at least set a good example, in occupying himself with chronology; and that, although no originality can be ascribed to his 'De sex ætatibus seculi,' it greatly helped to transmit and spread that general view of the development and stages of the history of the world which Augustine, Isidore of Seville, and others, had propounded.

We require to pass into another land and onwards into the eleventh century before we come to a writer who added to historical knowledge in anything like the same measure as Bede. Accordingly, I mention next the author of the 'Gesta Hamenaburgensis ecclesiæ pontificum,' generally known as Adam of Bremen. His work was written between 1072 and 1076. The archbishopric of Lund was not then founded, and all the Baltic regions—German, Scandinavian, and Russian—lay within the archbishopric of Hamburg-Bremen. Adam's history of this ecclesiastical province is the chief source of knowledge of the oldest history, both religious and secular, of the north of Europe. The information in it was drawn from books and documents now lost, as well as from personal research during its author's journeys for missionary purposes. It bears all the general marks of trustworthiness and truthfulness, although in parts much fable is mixed up with fact. Its style is natural and vigorous. Lappenberg says that if the author had only written in his own tongue he would have been "the Herodotus of the North."

In South Germany there lived a contemporary of the Canon of Bremen who was still more eminent as a writer,—Lambert of Hersfeld. Mr Freeman speaks of him thus: "He begins with annals; he gradually enlarges and warms, till his tale grows into that precious and admirable narrative of the great struggle between Pope and Cæsar, that narrative so clear, so full, so wisely treading the narrow path between partisan writers on either side, that it has won for a monk of the eleventh century his full right to a place alongside the foremost of the so-called ancients."[1] Perhaps these words convey too high an estimate of Lambert's impartiality. He was, indeed, impartial as compared with most of his contemporaries, but that his impartiality was more than thus relative, may fairly be doubted, and has been denied after special examination by critical historians like Ranke, Flotto, Geisebrecht, and Wattenbach. Probably the Pope received considerably more, and Cæsar considerably less, than justice from him, notwithstanding the natural independence, moderation, and liberality of judgment which cause him to contrast so favourably with the partisan writers of his day. No one will deny to him rare literary talent. His general style is a fine combination of native force and cultured elegance. He portrays character and pictures incident with a masterly hand. Many of his pages once read can never be forgotten.

The most philosophical of the medieval chroniclers was Otto of Freisingen,—the grandson of the Emperor Henry IV., half-brother of Conrad III., and uncle, confidant, and chosen biographer of Frederick I., the famous Barbarossa. He was an earnestly pious man, a theologian, a monk, an ecclesiastical dignitary, but also a man of clear and sound judgment, conversant with political affairs, and deeply interested in the fortunes of the empire. He died in 1158. His 'Chronicon' was written between 1143 and 1146. It consists of eight books, the first six of which were largely a reproduction of the Universal Chronicle of Ekkehard of Aurach. The seventh book is original work of great merit and value. The two books 'De gestis Frederici I.,' which may be viewed as continuing it, are of equal quality, and of even higher interest. It is from these books that the author's rank among historians must chiefly be determined. They entitle

[1] Methods of Historical Study, pp. 164, 165.

him to a high position. They are characterised by comprehensiveness of treatment, accuracy of statement, clearness of insight. They display a greater impartiality than the 'Annales' of Lambert. They are excellent in style and arrangement. They are lacking in no essential historical quality. The eighth book of the 'Chronicle' treats of the coming and dominion of Antichrist, of the end of the world, of the resurrection of the just and unjust, of the twofold judgment, of the condition of the lost, and of the life of the blessed in heaven. In the plan of Otto, it was a most essential portion of the work. To that work he himself gave a title which at once expressed its leading thought and indicated whence the thought was drawn,—"De rerum mundanarum mutatione, sive de duabus civitatibus." All in it turns on the Augustinian dualism of the earthly and heavenly cities, the antagonism of the kingdoms of man to the kingdom of Christ. From beginning to end its aim is to make apparent the mutability, the vanity, and miseries of mundane life, and that heaven is the only true refuge and home of humanity. The contentions of the time, and especially the conflict between pope and emperor, while perplexing his mind and grieving his heart, served to confirm him in a belief which he shared with many of his contemporaries, that the consummation of things was at hand; that soon Antichrist would appear, and that then Christ would come to judgment and take to Himself all power and dominion. He wrote, accordingly, "ex amaritudine animæ," and "non curiositatis causâ sed ad ostendendas caducarum rerum calamitates." His steady contemplation of the course of history from a religious point of view has caused his work to be described as "the first and only attempt at a philosophy of history made in the middle age." But it was rather an attempt to establish by history a thesis in theology. Certainly if a philosophy of history at all it was a poor one. Instead of seeking to exhibit the intrinsic significance of history, it sought to show that history had no intrinsic significance. A pessimistic view of life in time is not made satisfactory by being conjoined with an optimistic conception of life in eternity.

In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries there flourished in England a school of writers who, if less than historians proper,

were more than annalists or chroniclers. They took the classical historians as their models; sought to trace the relations of cause and effect, instead of servilely following the mere sequences of time; treated the course of events in England as not unconnected with the movement of affairs abroad; and, in a word, attempted to interpret as well as narrate, while also aiming at artistic excellence. This school was inaugurated by William of Malmesbury, and found its greatest representative in Matthew Paris. "In Matthew the breadth and precision of the narrative, the copiousness of his information on topics whether national or European, the general fairness and justice of his comments, are only surpassed by the patriotic fire and enthusiasm of the whole. . . . With all the fulness of the school of court historians, such as Benedict or Hoveden, he combines an independence and patriotism which is strange to their pages. He denounces with the same unsparing energy the oppression of the Papacy and the king. His point of view is neither that of a courtier nor of a Churchman, but of an Englishman, and the new national tone of his chronicle is but an echo of the national sentiment which at last bound nobles and yeomen and Churchmen together into an English people."[1]

It is unnecessary to trace further the course of Latin historiography. There is little to tempt us to linger on the Latin chronicles or histories composed in the later centuries of the middle age. I know of none of them not inferior to some of those which have been already noticed. The bonds of medieval Christendom had to be broken before there could be any marked advance. The next revival of Latin historical literature came only when it was on the eve of being generally abandoned. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries Polydore Vergil, Sleidan, De Thou, and others, reflected honour on its old age. Since the classic world passed away, Latin historiography never, perhaps, reached so near classic excellence as in the writings of these men. But they and their works do not fall to be considered here; they lie beyond the limits of the time to which this Introduction refers.

History can only be written adequately in the speech of the peoples who make history. Modern history required to be

[1] Green's Short Hist. of the Eng. People, pp. 142, 143.

recorded in the languages of the modern nations. Away from contact with Latin and the remains and traditions of Roman civilisation, the Norse people grew up heroic and adventurous, and the Norse tongue developed itself in freedom. Nowhere in Latinised Christendom did men write as well as the Scandinavian scalds spoke and sang. Hence lonely Iceland can boast of its Heimskringla, that immortal story of the Kings of Norway, by Snorro Sturleson, murdered in 1241, compared with the pages of which those even of a Matthew Paris are pale and tedious. There the wild Viking life, as it moved on through gloom and light, calm and storm, by land and on sea, in domestic scenes, strange adventures, fierce battles, and cruel tragedies, for more than three hundred years, is portrayed with the truth and power of a master akin in genius to Homer, and Scott, and Carlyle.

England can claim the honour of having had the earliest vernacular chronicle; Russia of having had the earliest vernacular history; France of having had the earliest series of popular chroniclers; and Italy of having had the earliest historians eminent for political knowledge and philosophical insight. The general and intense interest excited throughout Europe by the Crusades was what gave the chief direct impulse to the writing of history in the speech of the unlearned. Once begun various causes favoured its perpetuation, and such causes continually increased in number and power as feudalism fell and modern nations became constituted and consolidated. The rise and growth, however, of historiography in the French, German, Italian, and English languages, must not be treated of at this point, but in connection with the development of historical philosophy in the French, German, Italian, and English nations.

Medieval Europe produced nothing worthy to be called a philosophy of history. And this was natural, for medieval Europe was extremely ignorant alike of the facts and the methods which an adequate philosophy of history presupposes.

First, there was in the middle ages a want of the necessary facts, and a want of knowledge of what facts there were. Sciences differ greatly from one another as to the number of facts which they require for a foundation, as to the number of

observations they must have from which to start. In some, the phenomena are comparatively simple and obviously bound together by laws productive of order and harmony; in others, the phenomena are comparatively complex, and the connections among them exceedingly latent, abstruse, difficult to trace. Astronomy is a science of the former kind; geology of the latter: and that is one reason, and not the least powerful reason, why the one is so ancient and the other so recent. But as no science has facts so complex, so diverse, so mobile, so intermingled, to deal with as that of human history, manifestly none needs the same multiplicity of observations, so extensive and varied a range of experience. Confine the mind within any narrow sphere, and in vain will it try to discern the principles which pervade it and connect it with others; lay before it only the events of a few generations or nations, and in vain will it strive to reduce them under law. "It must," to use the words of M. Cousin, "see many empires, many religions, many systems, appear and disappear before it can ascend to the general laws which regulate the rise and fall of human things; it must survive many revolutions and must go through much disorder before it can comprehend that above and around all there is a beautiful and beneficent order." But how narrow was the range of experience and real information accessible to the medieval historian! Till the East and West came into contact through invasions and crusades, commerce and pilgrimages, little was known in Europe of the oriental world beyond what was stated in the Bible. The knowledge even of Roman history was for a long time in danger of being lost, and was preserved mainly through the growth of those practical interests which necessitated the study of Roman law. The knowledge of Greek history was virtually lost till the great revolution known as the Revival of Letters took place. Although almost all possible elements and forms of social life lay around the men who lived in that age of anarchy which was the immediate consequence of the victory of the barbarians over the Romans, they were so intermingled and undeveloped that any adequate insight into their real natures and issues was impossible. The sphere of historical knowledge thus narrow was only capable of being enlarged by a long series of events in history itself,—by the

rise and progress of arts, sciences, forms of government, and nations, by changes of creed and habits, by manifold inquiries and discoveries, suggesting or succeeding one another in an order determined by nature and reason.

The medieval mind was, further, most incapable of dealing rightly with the historical facts which were accessible to it. The primary requisite of history is, of course, that it be a true record of events, the statement only of what happened, the accurate statement of what happened. But that supposes the existence and exercise of qualities in which the medieval historian was specially and signally deficient, the power of truthful observation, the habit of weighing and sifting evidence, the ability to throw off prejudice, and lay the mind open to receive the real stamp and impression of the actual occurrences. He was, on the contrary, in the highest degree credulous, uncritical, and prejudiced. Ignorant of his ignorance, ignorant of what knowledge was, he readily accepted fictions as facts, and believed as unquestionable a crowd of legends regarding Greece and Rome, and even the States that had risen on the ruins of Rome, which made everything like a correct notion of the course of human development impossible. Imbued with the spirit of his age, he looked at all events through an ecclesiastical and dogmatic medium which effectually precluded him from fairly estimating secular, and, still more, heathen life. As regards stories of miracles, men of such general soundness of mind as Gregory of Tours and Bede were utterly unable to distinguish truth from error. Thousands on thousands of miracles were vouched for by the medieval chroniclers, and yet there is no warrant for supposing that a single true miracle was wrought during the whole medieval period. Certain writers have argued that some of the alleged miracles must have been true, otherwise so many false ones would not have been credited. But they have not ventured to point out which were true; and the supposition that God, by performing a few real miracles, provided a support for faith in a multitude of false ones, is far from a probable or pleasant hypothesis. It should be frankly acknowledged that in the middle age faith was to a large extent as blind as it was sincere. It is not necessary, however, to dwell on this point. Buckle has collected, in the sixth

chapter of the first volume of his 'History of Civilisation in England,' numerous instructive examples of the credulity of medieval chroniclers, and has proved in its thirteenth chapter that the free and impartial criticism of testimony failed to penetrate even into French historiography before the seventeenth century. Lecky in his 'History of the Rise and Influence of the Spirit of Rationalism in Europe,' Draper in his 'Intellectual Development of Europe,' and Mazzarella in his 'Storia della Critica,' while furnishing confirmatory evidence, have shown how, through the concurrent action of many causes, the spirit of inquiry grew up and spread, how the fetters of theological dogmatism were gradually broken, and how the prejudices which had riveted them on were gradually rooted out. The art and theory of historical criticism were alike unknown to the medieval historians.

But the correct ascertainment of the facts is merely the first and simplest function of method; the inductive use of the facts is a more difficult one, and is necessarily later in appearing. It was impossible that the processes of induction could be successfully applied to historical materials before the mind had become accustomed to deal truthfully and independently with these materials as individual phenomena, and to employ these processes in the various departments of the physical sciences where their employment is so much simpler. In fact, only since the eighteenth century can historians be found occupying themselves with the remote causes of events, with general social tendencies, with the principles of intellectual and political development which circumscribe and dominate individual wills. The historians of antiquity aimed at describing events in a truthful, agreeable, and morally and politically profitable manner; their highest ambition was the composition of works beautiful in form and practically edifying in contents, and they succeeded to admiration; but even the profoundest among them made no attempt to go farther back along the lines of causation than to the motives of the actors engaged, or the direct influences of certain social institutions. The middle ages were giving place to the modern era before the search for causes was carried even thus far by later historians. Mr Hallam is, I believe, correct in saying that Philippe de Commines "is the first modern writer

who in any degree has displayed sagacity in reasoning on the characters of men and the consequences of their actions, or who has been able to generalise his observations by comparison and reflection." He was certainly surpassed, however, both in power of analysis and generalisation by his Italian contemporary, Machiavelli, and yet even this great writer, although he shows in his 'Discorsi sopra la prima deca di T. Livio' a singular clearness and keenness of insight into the proximate causes, both political and psychological, of events, and a singular power of reasoning from particulars to particulars, from ancient to modern actions and institutions, neglects remote causes, and rests content with analogies instead of laws,—analogies which he has often exaggerated and overstrained in order to convert them into practical lessons for immediate application. Vico and Montesquieu were the morning stars of a brighter and broader day, the light of which is now reflected from the pages of almost all historians of recognised ability, not excluding even those who speak most despairingly of everything of the nature of historical science or philosophy. It is now generally acknowledged that the historian must not merely give correct information as to particular actions and agents, but must exhibit them in connection with the spirit, tendencies, and interests of the age to which they belonged, with a collective life, the phases of which are determined by forces which manifest themselves more or less in individual events and persons, but extend far beyond, behind, and beneath them. Thus a Grote or Curtius, a Niebuhr or Mommsen, casts over the events even of Greek and Roman history a kind of light not to be found in Herodotus and Thucydides, Livy and Polybius, and which is essentially scientific in character, because due to the knowledge of laws and causes discoverable neither by the mere observation of events nor insight into the motives of individuals, but only by an elaborate use of the processes and resources of the inductive method. In the sphere of history, analysis and comparison have received new applications, classification and generalisation increased light and power, with the result that entire new departments of history have been constituted. We are no longer content with records of external transactions, but seek also to know the growth of reason and culture themselves,—

the development of humanity in all its aspects and activities, industrial, æsthetic, political, moral, religious, and scientific. But all this is modern. The men of medieval times were so ignorant of scientific law and method as to have no conception of any of the forms of history in which a knowledge of them is implied.

It must not be forgotten, however, that during the middle age there existed a Mohammedan as well as a Christian civilisation, and a Mohammedan as well as a Christian historiography. In the seventh century Mohammed founded a new religion, which first united into a single people the scattered tribes of Arabia, and then spread with unparalleled rapidity over the eastern provinces of Rome, Persia, Scinde, Egypt, North Africa, and Spain. It everywhere roused and quickened the minds of its believers; and for several centuries Moslim civilisation in most respects equalled, and in some surpassed, the Christian civilisation which it confronted.

There were no historical compositions in Arabic before the time of Mohammed. The Prophet himself was the first subject of historical interest and treatment; the next was the exploits of those who fought in his cause. For about a century after his death history was communicated almost exclusively by spoken, not written words. Oral tradition, however, increasingly disclosed its inadequacy; and as great events rapidly succeeded one another, a luxuriant growth of historical literature naturally followed. That literature became not only of vast magnitude but of great value. The Christian medieval world was only a part of the medieval world, and a part imperfectly intelligible without acquaintance with its Mohammedan counterpart and complement. It may be safely affirmed that all our universal histories, histories of civilisation, and philosophies of history, suffer from their authors' defective knowledge of the history of Mohammedanism. Probably no class of scholars have it in their power to increase more the stock of generally useful historical knowledge than those who are qualified to appreciate and utilise the Arabic historians. The histories of Mohammedan countries in the middle age have been as fully recorded by Mohammedan annalists as those of the various regions of Christendom during the same period by the monkish

chroniclers; and consequently, a knowledge of the former as exact and ample as of the latter is recoverable, and may equally be made to enter into the common inheritance of educated mankind.

In the early period of Mohammedan historiography a prominent place was occupied, as has been said, by accounts of Mohammed, and of the wars in which his immediate followers were engaged. The genealogies of Arab tribes and families received much attention. The collection of the traditions relating to the Prophet and to religious beliefs and practices was a work in which great interest was felt and by which reputation was most easily gained. The mode in which the written history arose out of oral testimony had a decisive influence on its whole form and character, as is well indicated in the following remarks of De Slane: "The documents relative to Muhammadan history were transmitted during the first centuries by oral tradition from one *hâfiz* to another, and these persons made it an object of their particular care not to alter, in the least degree, the narrations which they had received. The pieces thus preserved were generally furnished by eyewitnesses of the facts which are related in them, and are therefore of the highest importance, not only for the history of the Moslim people, but for that of the Arabic language. The *hâfiz* who communicated a narration of this kind to his scholar never neglected indicating beforehand the series of persons through whom it had successively passed before it came down to him, and this introduction, or *support—isnâd,* as the Arabs call it—is the surest proof that what follows is authentic. The increasing number of these narrations became at length a burden to the best memory, and it was found necessary to write down the more ancient of them lest they should be forgotten. One of the first and most important of these collections was Ibn Ishâk's History of the Moslim Wars, a work of which we possess but a small portion, containing the life of Muhammad, with notes and additions by a later editor, Ibn Hishâm; this is a book of the highest authority, and deservedly so, but it is unfortunately of great rareness. The History of Islamism, by At-Tabari, was formed also in a similar manner; being merely a collection of individual narrations preceded by their *isnâds;* many of them

relate to the same event, and from their mutual comparison a very complete idea can be acquired of the history of that early period. These collections of original documents were consulted by later historians, such as Ibn Al-Ianzi, Ibn Al-Athîr, and others, and it was from these sources that they drew the facts set forth in their respective works. It may be laid down as a general principle that Islamic history assumed at first the form of a collection of statements, each of them authenticated by an *isnâd;* then came a writer who combined these accounts, but suppressed the *isnâds* and the repetitions; he was followed by the maker of abridgments, who condensed the work of his predecessor and furnished a less expensive book on the same subject."[1]

The method followed by Mohammedan historians in the composition of their works compelled them from the first to exercise a certain kind and measure of historical criticism. Proceeding on a recognition of the supreme importance of the testimony of the primary witnesses, it required an examination of the claims of those who passed for such. The Mohammedan historian could not fail to perceive that he was bound to satisfy himself as to the credibility of the persons whose reports he collected and recorded. But he was content to discharge this duty in a very perfunctory manner. He deemed it enough to know on merely general and external grounds that they were men of good reputation, without any careful comparison and sifting examination of their reports themselves. We cannot credit the Arabic historians with the knowledge or practice of historical criticism in its modern sense. Wakidi, Tabari, Coteiba, Mas'udi, were unacquainted with it. Ibn Khaldun stood almost alone in clearly apprehending its nature and realising its importance. There was no lack of need for its exercise. An enormous number of false traditions were early in circulation; genealogies were at an early date largely fabricated; the early chroniclers readily accepted fictions as facts whenever they tended to glorify the Prophet and his followers. At a later period, works deliberately falsifying history were written to serve some immediate purpose, and ascribed to early annalists of good repute. A number of writings on which

[1] Ibn Khallikan's Biographical Dictionary: Introduction, pp. xxi, xxii.

European authors have founded as genuine productions of the older Mohammedan historians are spurious or mendaciously corrupted. For example, the Account of the Conquest of Syria, attributed to Wakidi, on which the first part of Ockley's well-known book is chiefly based, must have been written in the time of the Crusades; and so also the Historical Notices on the Spiritual and Temporal Powers attributed to Coteiba, and unfortunately relied on as his by Gayangos, Weil, and Amari.

In the second century of the Mohammedan era *Hisham* was the most renowned of the genealogists. Until recent research cast suspicion on the whole assumption of the soundness of the Arabic genealogical system, he was credited with having laid a solid foundation for the labours of his successors. *Ma'mar* (ben el-Muthaná), who died in 209 A.H. (821 A.D.), published about 200 works, the most important of which treated of historical subjects. He wrote a history of Mecca and of Medina, but showed, like so many Arabic historiographers, a marked preference for themes relating to war. In one of his writings he commemorated 1200 of the days on which the Arabs had been engaged in battle. He was himself of Jewish-Persian descent, and although he had in various writings glorified the achievements of the Arabs, he gave free expression to his hatred of themselves, and thereby caused great offence. His contemporary, *Wakidi* (d. 207 A.H.), enjoyed immense popularity in his lifetime, and his fame as an historian has in the East never waned. He was a man of indefatigable diligence. He is said to have kept two slaves constantly employed in copying and transcribing for him, and to have left books filling 600 chests, each of which required two men to carry it. A History of Mohammedan Conquests is his most important work, and it is an excellent, almost typical, example of the Arabic historiography of the time.

Literature in many forms was cultivated with great zeal and success in Mohammedan lands during the third century after the Flight (815–912 A.D.) Among the historians of the period it may suffice to mention only Bochari, Coteiba, and Tabari. *Bochari* acquired high fame as a commentator on the Koran, and became the most eminent authority on the subject of tradition. He wrote a work known as the Great History, on the trustworthy and untrustworthy traditionists; and drew up

the *Kitâb as-Sahîh,* a collection of 7275 traditions which he regarded as genuine. The latter is said to have cost him sixteen years' labour, and its contents to have been selected from a mass of 600,000 traditions. The traditions accepted by Bochari are generally received by Mohammedans without question, his discrimination and fairness of judgment being deemed by them to have been as extraordinary as his memory and erudition. *Coteiba* was a man of varied literary gifts, and particularly distinguished as a philologist and exegete. His 'Book of Facts,' or, as Wustenfeld its editor calls it, 'Handbook of History,' and his 'Exquisite Histories,' are allowed to be characterised by exceptional keenness and comprehensiveness of research, and accuracy and elegance of statement. He showed great good sense in avoiding diffuseness, refraining from useless repetitions, and silently rejecting uncertified traditions. *Tabari* was born in 224 and died in 310 of the Hegira. His Commentary on the Koran is deemed by some judges an even greater work than his Annals; but, however this may be, the latter work has made his name one of the most renowned and esteemed in Arabic historiography. It may be reckoned the first General History written from the Mohammedan point of view. It began with the creation and ended with 302 A.H. (914 A.D.). It was planned on the largest scale, and executed with great skill and ability, with unsparing toil, with vast information, with independence of judgment, with attractiveness of style. It was a collection of historical traditions and documents so ample yet judicious, and so aptly combined, that it was at once recognised as a substitute for many, and a supplement to all, previous historical works. The study of general history had been not only neglected by the early Moslims, but purposely shunned as unlawful and dangerous. This prejudice was in course of time overcome; and after the appearance of Tabari's Annals, general surveys of history became common. Of course, the authors of such surveys all assumed that the triumph of Islam was the goal of history. Their guiding thread through the ancient world was the succession of generations, and especially the succession of prophets, from Adam to Mohammed, as represented in the Hebrew records and Arabic or Persian traditions. The Mohammedan view of ancient history

had all the defects of the medieval Christian view, with others peculiarly its own. Tabari's work had the fault of being far too long. The Arabic mode of writing history necessarily tended to excessive bulk, and its accompaniment excessive cost. Hence there was a demand for abridgments, and these often practically displaced the works which they summarised. With all its reputation and merits, the Chronicle of Tabari fell almost into oblivion after it had been abridged and continued by El-Makin (Elmacin). Considerable portions of it have been translated into Latin by Kosegarten, into French by Dubeux, and into German by Nöldeke.

Another historical writer of great celebrity was *Mas'udi*, whose life fell mostly within the tenth century of our era, as he died in 345 or 346 A.H. He has been likened to Herodotus; and he cannot be denied to have had a curiosity as active and universal, and to have acquired an even larger stock of knowledge of all kinds. He spent a large portion of his life in travelling, and yet left an enormous mass of writing. He visited India, Ceylon, China, Madagascar, South Arabia, Persia, the regions about the Caspian Sea, Russia, Syria, Egypt, Morocco, and Spain; and wherever he went, geography, manners, politics, religion, and history, were alike the objects of his eager investigation. He embodied the results in a 'History of the Times,' the wonder and delight of the East, yet so vast that it has never been printed. He, however, abridged it under the title of 'Meadows of Gold and Mines of Gems,' and on this abridgment his fame chiefly rests.[1] He showed little skill in methodising the enormous stores of information which he had accumulated. His transitions from one subject to another are often most arbitrary. He was devoid of the artistic sense which enabled Herodotus to combine his varied materials into an admirable, almost dramatic, whole. He lacked also his simple grace and exquisite naturalness of style. As he was even less critical and more credulous than Herodotus, he received on hearsay as facts a host of fables. Yet his work was highly valuable, greatly increasing the sum of historical knowledge, and even displaying more genuine historical interest and

[1] Macondi, Les prairies d'or. Texte et traduction par C. Barbier de Maynard et Pavet de Courteille. T. i.-ix. Paris, 1861-77.

ability than any work produced in Europe in the same century. The mere indication, however, of the variety and distribution of its contents may be more instructive than further description. The first six chapters give an account, drawn from the Hebrew Scriptures, the Koran, and oriental traditions, of the period between the creation of the world and the birth of Mohammed, which, ludicrous and legendary as it in great part is, is of the same character as what still passes in Mohammedan lands for true history. The seventh chapter treats of the Hindus, their scientific knowledge, their religious opinions, and their various governments, but shows complete ignorance of their early history. It is followed by seven chapters (8-14) mainly relating to physical and historical geography, but including not a few digressions and marvellous stories. The fifteenth chapter is on China, and admirably appreciative of the character, religion, and polity of its people, although the views which it gives of early Chinese history are quite mythical. The next chapter is a strange medley on seas and islands, Spain and other countries, and perfumes. It is followed by one which contains much valuable information regarding the Caucasian regions and their inhabitants, and a good deal which is merely curious about apes and falcons. Then come seven chapters (18-24), weighted with matter imperfectly sifted, on the Assyrian and Persian kings. They are succeeded by three chapters, respectively on the Greeks and their history, Alexander in India, and the Greek kings after Alexander. And these are followed up by three relating to the Roman Empire—the first treating of the period before Christianity was acknowledged as the State religion, the second of the Byzantine emperors prior to the rise of Islam, and the third of the emperors who reigned from that date to the time when Mas'udi wrote. Egypt and Alexandria are dealt with in two chapters (31-32); the Sudanese, Slavonians, Franks, and Lombards, in one each (33-36). The chapters on the 'Adites (37), on the Themudites (38), and on Mecca and the Ka'aba (39), may be regarded as forming another group. They are followed by a general discourse on the various countries of the earth, and on love to the native soil (40). The next five chapters relate to Yemen and its history. The succeeding six form a treasury of information on the manners,

customs, superstitions, and folk-lore of the Arabs. After giving an account of Seil el 'Arem (53), Mas'udi introduces an erudite and elaborate dissertation on the months of the Arabs, Kopts, Syrians, and Parsis, on the revolutions of the sun and moon, and on opinions as to the influence of the heavenly bodies (54-62). With equal fulness he treats of the sacred houses of the Hindus, Greeks, Romans, Slavonians, Sabaeans, and Magians (63-68). The sixty-ninth chapter is a conspectus of chronology from the beginning of history to the birth of Mohammed. Five chapters are occupied with Mohammed—his descent, his deeds, his mission, and his doctrines. The last sixty-seven chapters are a history of the Khalifats to the end of the ninth century.

During five centuries after the death of Mas'udi, Arabic historiography continued to be diligently cultivated. It was, perhaps, the last branch of Mohammedan literature to wither and decay. In all these centuries there were writers who attempted to compose universal histories on the model of that of Tabari, and to combine geography and physical science generally with history after the manner of Mas'udi. There were others who rendered eminent services by working within narrower and more definite limits, as, *e.g.*, *Biruni* († 1038 A.D.)[1] by his researches into the history of India, and *Abdallatif* († 1231 A.D.), whose well-known description of Egypt is very remarkable for the naturalness and simplicity of its style, and the fulness and accuracy of its information. Local history received much attention, and such towns as Damascus, Bagdad, Ispahan, &c., were the subjects of most voluminous works. Biography was especially popular. Even biographical dictionaries were numerous. Most of them were special, some treating of the companions of Mohammed, or of the persons mentioned in the collections of traditions; others, of the princes of a particular dynasty, or of the famous men of a particular city, or of classes of celebrated persons—as, *e.g.*, of theologians, jurists, philosophers, physicians, or poets. Others were general. Of these the most successful was the Biographical Dictionary of *Ibn Khallikan* († 1282 A.D.), whom Sir William Jones has

[1] His 'Chronology of Ancient Nations' has been translated into English by C. E. Sachau. London, 1878.

pronounced to be perhaps the best writer of lives, "et certé copiosior Nepote, elegantior Plutarcho, Laertio jucundior." *Shahrastani* († 1153 A.D.) deserves to be gratefully remembered for his 'Book of Religious and Philosophical Sects.'[1]

While Arabic historiography was not devoid of obvious merits, it never reached the scientific or philosophical stage. Among the many who cultivated it, none got much beyond mere description and annalistic narration. *Athir* (1160-1232 A.D.), the author of a Universal History or Chronicle, edited in 14 vols. and partially translated (into Swedish) by Tornberg, probably comes nearest being an exception to this statement. He was not content merely to relate events in the order of their occurrence, but sought also to discover and exhibit their natural antecedents and consequences. Farther than this, however, he did not go; he made no endeavour to obtain an insight into the evolution of the general ideas which pervade history, and of the operations of those deeper causes of social change by which its immediate and visible causes are called into existence or conditioned in their action.

As regards the science or philosophy of history, Arabic literature was adorned by one most brilliant name. Neither the classical nor the medieval Christian world can show one of nearly the same brightness. *Ibn Khaldun* (A.D. 1332-1406), considered simply as an historian had superiors even among Arabic authors, but as a theorist on history he had no equal in any age or country until Vico appeared, more than three hundred years later. Plato, Aristotle, and Augustine were not his peers, and all others were unworthy of being even mentioned along with him. He was admirable alike by his originality and sagacity, his profundity and his comprehensiveness. He was, however, a man apart, as solitary and unique among his co-religionists and contemporaries in the department of historical philosophy as was Dante in poetry or Roger Bacon in science among theirs. Arabic historians had, indeed, collected the materials which he could use, but he alone used them. Of this remarkable man, however, and of his views on history, I shall treat at some length in the last section of this Introduction.

[1] Edited by Cureton, London, 1846, and translated into German by Haarbrücker, Halle, 1850-51.

IV.

The growth of history towards a scientific stage has been partly the consequence and partly the cause of the growth of certain ideas, without a firm and comprehensive grasp of which no philosophical study or conception of history is possible. It seems necessary to indicate what has been the history of some of the more important of these ideas, to the period when our account of the development of the philosophy of history begins. Farther, there is no need at present to go, as their later history is included in that of the philosophy of history itself.

By ideas is not here meant anything mysterious or metaphysical, but only general thoughts which connect and render intelligible a certain number of facts. There must be general thoughts, there must be appropriate ideas, before facts are intelligible. This is in no real contradiction to the obvious truth that thoughts are only general in virtue of being thoughts of so many facts; that ideas are only appropriate in virtue of being appropriate to the facts. Professor Roscher of Leipsic points out, in his work on Thucydides, how that great historian's usual explanation of things amounts to this—A is the cause of B, and B is the cause of A. And it is more or less so with all great historians. It is only narrow and meagre pragmatical historians, or rather historical logicians, who affirm rigidly and invariably that A is the cause of B, B of C, and C of D, &c. Wherever there is an organism like a living body, the mind of man, or even a society,—wherever there is correlation of parts and functions—wherever there is action and reaction, —the single linear series of causes and effects is not found. A is the cause of B and B of A, inconsistent as it may seem to be, is then often a truer formula than A is the cause of B and B of C, consistent as it may seem to be. The case in hand is an instance. Without facts, no ideas. Without ideas, virtually no facts; nothing that is a fact for thought; nothing that the mind can make any use of.

I. One of the most important of the ideas referred to is that of progress. The philosophy of history deals not exclusively

but to a great extent with laws of progress, with laws of evolution; and until the idea of progress was firmly and clearly apprehended, little could be done in it. Now the history of that idea, within the period which at present concerns us, is nearly as follows.

In the oriental world it was unknown, or denied, or apprehended only in an exceedingly limited degree. The common assertion that the diametrically opposite idea of deterioration—the belief that the course of human affairs is from good to bad and from bad to worse—pervaded all Asiatic thought, whether religious or political, is undoubtedly an exaggeration. The safe affirmation is that a definite general view of history was seldom formed, and, where formed, was very rarely indeed, if ever, that of a progressive development.

It was not to be expected that such an idea should originate and prevail in China. No one, it is true, who has felt interest enough in that singular nation to study the researches and translations of Remusat, Panthier, Julien, Legge, Plath, Faber, Eitel, and others, will hesitate to dismiss as erroneous the commonplace that it has been an unprogressive nation. The development and filiation of thought is scarcely less traceable in the history and literature of China than of Greece; and genuine Chinese historiography, unperverted and uncorrupted by the mythological fictions of Buddhism, makes no extravagant pretensions either as to the antiquity or dignity of the national origin, but, with rare honesty and sobriety of judgment goes back to the small and barbarous horde in the forests and mountains of Shensee, which Footsoushe began to reduce to settled order rather more than three thousand years before the Christian era. Development has been, however, for very long slower in China than anywhere else, periods of decadence have been more numerous, reverence for the past has been stronger and more confirmed, while the power of generalisation, the ability to take comprehensive views, is just the quality in which the Chinese mind, in many respects admirably endowed, is most deficient. Among the Chinese, as among the Egyptians, Babylonians, and Hindus, the theory of cosmical and human cycles has appeared in various forms. As the observation of history, however, seems to have had almost nothing to do with its for-

mation, I content myself with referring any one who feels an interest in it to the articles of Remusat in the 'Journal des Savants' (Oct., Nov., Dec., 1831), and to the learned and curious dissertation of P. Leroux in his 'De l'Humanité' (t. ii. ch. viii.).

In India, where human existence was regarded as a mere stage in the course of transmigration, where the sense of the evil and transitoriness of life has for ages had an intensity and depth the European mind can perhaps hardly realise,—in India, the home of pantheism, fatalism, and caste,—the thought of social progress and its inspiring hopes could never possess the heart. Instead, there was the mythical dream of vast chronological cycles, each divisible into four epochs, which are the stages through which the universe and its inhabitants must pass from perfection to destruction, from strength and innocence to weakness and depravity, until a new *mahá-yuga* or great cycle begins.

The old Ormazd religion gave expression to the hope that evil would not last for ever,—that the Power of Darkness would cease on some predestined day to struggle with his righteous adversary, and bow to his authority, and neither will nor work wickedness any more; but it did so only fitfully and feebly, sometimes suggesting the opposite, and never connecting with the hope of the final victory of goodness any doctrine of gradual progress.

The religion of Israel was of its very nature a religion of the future, a religion of hope. Expectation was throughout its attitude; it in all its parts pointed forward beyond itself; from generation to generation its voice was that of one crying, Prepare. Still there is no evidence of the ancient Jews having attained to a conscious apprehension of the idea of progress, nor is there any distinct enunciation of that idea in the Old Testament.

It is often said, and even by those who ought to know much better, that the Greeks and Romans conceived of the course of history only as a downward movement, whereas, in fact, they conceived of it in all ways—*i.e.*, as a process of deterioration, a progress, and a cycle, although in none profoundly or consistently. The natural illusion of the individual that the days of his boyhood were brighter and better than those of his

maturity, is also an illusion natural to the race, natural to nations, one which many circumstances seem to confirm, one which can only be adequately corrected by such a survey of bygone generations as antiquity had not the power to make; and the thought of a deterioration of human life from age to age certainly often meets us in the literatures of Greece and Rome, as was to be expected. But the obtrusively manifest fact that the origins of all things, so far as they could be traced, were small and feeble—the knowledge of the existence of various rude and savage peoples, the abundant evidences which a Greek of the age of Pericles, or a Roman of the age of Augustus, possessed, of the civilisation he enjoyed having been evolved out of a comparatively barbarous social state, suggested also to many thoughtful minds of the classical world the notion of progress. And the circular movements of the stars, the cycle of changes through which the lives of all plants and animals pass from birth to death, and fatalistic and pantheistic principles, led to the inference that the events of human history fall into circuits, which resemble or repeat one another. It is necessary to establish this by indicating the most interesting and decisive proof-passages.

Through the 'Works and Days' of Hesiod there breathes the feeling that the youth and glory of the world has passed away; that man has fallen; that the race is not what it was; that existence, once easy, innocent, joyous, has become difficult, pervaded by evil, full of woes. And this change for the worse, this "fall," is explained by two myths, which seem inconsistent with each other: the one, perhaps of Semitic origin, introduced into Greece through Phœnicia, tracing the toils and miseries of life to the box of Pandora and Prometheus's theft of fire from heaven;[1] while the other, which is widely diffused among the Aryan peoples, refers them to the gradual degeneration of the human species through a series of ages.[2] As to the latter myth, it is to be remarked that the ages are, according to Hesiod, the golden, the silver, the brazen, the heroic, and the iron, so that the process of deterioration is represented as not quite continuous, there being an age, named after no metal, better than that which preceded it, and thus an exception to what is otherwise

[1] Ἔργα καὶ Ἡμέραι, 42-105.

[2] Ibid., 109-201.

the rule. The most obvious, and probably the true, explanation of the exception is, that the heroic age could not, consistently with the traditions which represented the heroes as the founders of Greek families and cities, be fitted harmoniously into the series represented by metals, because it could not be placed elsewhere than immediately before the age of ordinary mortals. Goettling would so interpret the text of Hesiod as to make it an expression of belief in the theory of cycles, but his interpretation seems to have nothing to recommend it except ingenuity in error.

Anaximander, one of the earliest of Greek philosophers, working out his idea of the Infinite or Unconditioned being the first principle of the universe, arrived both at a sort of rude nebular hypothesis and a sort of rude development hypothesis. From the ἄπειρον, or primitive indeterminate matter, through an inherent and eternal energy and movement the two original contraries of heat and cold separate; what is cold settles down to the centre and so forms the earth, what is hot ascends to the circumference and so originates the bright, shining, fiery bodies of heaven, which are but the fragments of what once existed as a complete shell or sphere, but in time burst and broke up and so gave rise to the stars. The action of the sun's heat on the watery earth next generated films or bladders, out of which came different kinds of imperfectly organised beings, which were gradually developed into the animals which now live. Man's ancestors were fishlike creatures which dwelt in muddy waters, and only, as the sun slowly dried up the earth, became gradually fitted for life on dry land.[1] A similar view was held by the poet, priest, prophet, and philosopher Empedocles. He taught that out of the four elements of earth, air, fire, and water, and under the moving power of Love resisting Hate, plants, animals, and man were in succession, and after many an effort and many a futile conjunction of organs, generated and elaborated into their present shapes.[2] This kind and measure of belief in progress did not, however, prevent Anaxi-

[1] Plutarchus de Plac. Phil., ii. 25, iii. 16, v. 19, ap. Euseb. Præp. Evang., i. 8, &c.

[2] Mullach's Empedoclis Carmina, 314-316, in Frag. Phil. Gr. or Ælian H. A., xvi. 29, and Arist. Phys., ii. 8.

mander from holding also that generation must be followed by destruction in a necessary cycle, that "things must all return whence they came according to destiny;" nor did it keep Empedocles from teaching that the souls of men were spirits fallen from a state of bliss in heaven and doomed to wander for "thirty thousand seasons," tossed from element to element, through all the changes of transmigration, plant, bird, fish, beast or human being, in this "over-vaulted cave," this "gloomy meadow of discord," the earth.

With the theories of these two philosophers may be connected what Æschylus makes Prometheus say about the primitive state of men,—how they had eyes and saw not, ears and heard not,—how they dwelt in the sunless depths of caves, were ignorant of the signs of the seasons and the simplest rudiments of art, pursued all their occupations without discernment, and left their entire life to chance and confusion, till he taught them to number, to write, to mark the risings and the settings of the stars, to build houses, to tame and train animals, to cure diseases, to navigate the sea, and practise the various modes of divination.[1] Euripides puts similar language into the mouth of Theseus in the Suppliants.[2]

The oriental doctrine of vast chronological cycles or world-years reappeared in Greece, perhaps as an Orphic legend,[3] and certainly as a tenet of Stoic philosophy; for the advocates of that system, reasoning from their pantheistic conviction that God is the creative soul of the world, the eternal force which forms and permeates it, the spirit of ever-acting and living fire, which manifests itself outwardly as matter when its heat declines, and burns up matter when its heat is intense, concluded that in a necessary and endless succession world after world was created and destroyed, each new world being exactly like its predecessor, and all things in it without exception running round in the same order from beginning to end. In the words of Nemesius: "The Stoics taught that in fixed periods of time a burning and destruction of all things take place, and the world returns again from the beginning into the very same

[1] Æsch. Pr., 451-515. [2] Eur. Supp., 201-218.
[3] Creuzer's Symbolik, pt. iii. p. 315-318.

shape as it had before, and that the restoration of them all happens not once but often, or rather that the same things are restored an infinite number of times."[1]

It is likewise certain that no one conception of the course of the world's history exclusively possessed the Roman mind. No more graphic picture of man's primitive condition as a savage state is to be found in any literature, and no more ingenious or consistent conjectural account of the origination of language, laws, customs, institutions, arts, and sciences, than those presented in the last five hundred and thirty lines of the fifth book of Lucretius.[2] Yet, although that great poet there develops in its entirety the theory which Sir John Lubbock and so many others are now urging on our acceptance, he elsewhere teaches us that the world like all things mortal will perish,—that already it is past its full growth—can no longer produce what it once did—is wasting away, worn out by age,—that the day draws near which shall give over to destruction seas, lands, and heaven :—

> "Multosque per annos
> Sustentata ruet moles et machina mundi."[3]

Ovid gives expression with great beauty to the popular faith in four ages of continuous deterioration,[4] and represents Jove as remembering "that it is recorded in the book of fate, that the time will come when the sea, and the earth, and the palaces of heaven will be kindled into flame and glow with fervent heat, and the laboured structure of the world will perish."[5] Virgil sings of a golden age, a Saturnian time, when suffering and sin were unknown, when men had all things in common, and Nature poured forth her bounties abundantly and spontaneously ; but he believes that a beneficent purpose underlay man's fall from this condition, that Jove did away with this easy state of existence in order that man might be forced to evolve the resources in his own mind and in outer nature, and that experience by dint of thought should hammer out the various arts in a course of

[1] Nem. de. Nat. Hom., c. 38 ; Cicero, Nat. Deor., ii. 46 ; Origen, Con. Cels., iv.
[2] De Rer. Nat., v. 925-1457.
[3] De Rer. Nat., ii. 1148-1174 ; v. 92-95.
[4] Met., i. 89-150.
[5] Ibid., i. 256-258.

gradual discovery and improvement.[1] The poet thus combined belief in a fall with belief in progress; perhaps he combined belief in both with a belief in world-cycles, and he has certainly given marvellous expression to the hope that the simplicity, peace, and happiness of the golden age would be restored.[2] The well-known lines of Horace—

> "Damnosa quid non imminuit dies?
> Ætas parentum, pejor avis, tulit
> Nos nequiores, mox daturos
> Progeniem vitiosiorem,"—[3]

have been often quoted as embodying the single and entire feeling of classical antiquity regarding the course of humanity. But they cannot fairly be understood as conveying even their author's own opinion of human development in itself, or as expressing any general "Weltanschauung"; they are merely the utterance of complaint against the religious and moral corruption of his time; and he has elsewhere described the first men as mere animals, a filthy and speechless herd, fighting with their nails and fists for acorns and lairs,—a race of beings who gradually found out words, and gradually learned to refrain from theft, adultery, and murder, to build and fortify towns, and establish laws.[4]

Passing from poets to prose authors we find that Cicero, without expressing an opinion as to general progress, has declared that philosophy is progressive; that study and application are rewarded by new discoveries; that the most recent things are generally the most precise and certain.[5] Seneca has declaimed against a philosophy which would aim at being useful, against mechanical inventions, wealth, and comfort, in a way that has become celebrated;[6] and yet he has not only insisted on the past progress of astronomical science, and avowed his belief that its progress would continue,[7] but has declared of Nature in general that she has always new secrets to disclose to those who seek them, that she unveils her mysteries only gradually in the long succession of generations—and of truth in general, that although we fancy ourselves initiated we are only on the

[1] Georg., i. 120-149.
[2] Ecl., iv.
[3] Odes, book iii. ode 6.
[4] Satires, book i. sat. 8.
[5] Academics, i. 4; ii. 5; De Legibus, i. 9.
[6] Ep., 90.
[7] Nat. Quæst., vii. 25.

threshold of her temple.[1] The elder Pliny has exhorted us "firmly to trust that the ages go on incessantly improving."[2] And still more remarkable in some respects than any of these recognitions of progress is that contained in the preface to the 'Epitome of Roman History' by Florus. It is not so comprehensive as many of the passages which have been cited, being explicitly confined to a single nation; but it is obviously drawn more from history itself, and it is the first clear enunciation of a theorem which has since been presented and illustrated in numberless ways,—viz., that nations pass through a succession of ages similar to those of the individual. "If any one," he says, "will consider the Roman people as if it were a man, and observe its entire course, how it began, how it grew up, how it reached a certain youthful bloom, and how it has since, as it were, been growing old, he will find it to have four degrees and stages (quatuor gradus processusque). Its first age was under the kings, and lasted nearly 250 years, during which it struggled round its mother against its neighbours; this was its infancy. The next extended from the consulship of Brutus and Collatinus to that of Appius Claudius and Quintus Fulvius, a period of 250 years, during which it subdued Italy; this was a time entirely given up to war, and may be called its youth. Thence to the time of Cæsar Augustus was a period of 200 years, in which it reduced to subjection the whole world; this may accordingly be called the manhood, and, as it were, the robust maturity, of the empire. From Cæsar Augustus to our own age is a period of little less than 200 years, in which through the inactivity of the Cæsars the nation has, as it were, grown old and feeble, except that now under the sway of Trajan it raises its arms, and, contrary to the expectation of all, the old age of the empire, as if youth were restored to it, flourishes with new vigour."

Enough has now been said to prove that the notion of pro-

[1] Nat. Quæst., vii. 31. The following lines of a tragedy—probably Seneca's —have often been referred to as an unconscious prophecy of the discovery of America:

> "Venient annis sæcula seris
> Quibus Oceanus vincula rerum
> Laxet, et ingens pateat tellus,
> Tethysque novos detegat orbes;
> Nec sit terris ultima Thule."—Medea, act ii. chorus.

[2] Hist. Nat., xix. 1-4.

gress in history was far from unknown to the thinkers of Greece and Rome, but was one of various notions of human development, all not unfrequently entertained ; and to show at the same time that it was only apprehended in a vague, general way—never defined, never analysed, and especially never satisfactorily derived from a sufficiency of appropriate facts. Often as we meet with it in classical antiquity, we never find it in a form which shows that it had been comprehended with scientific precision and thoroughness. It is not otherwise as regards early Christian and medieval writers, among whom the notion was never wholly lost, yet never so apprehended as the philosophy of history presupposes and requires. A few sentences will suffice to show this.

It was no part of the mission of Christ or of His apostles to teach the full truth on such a subject as historical progress ; but it came within their purpose to indicate the general relation of the Gospel to the past state, actual wants, and future destiny of man. And the antitheses of the Sermon on the Mount, the general reasoning of the Epistle to the Hebrews, the principles involved in several of St Paul's arguments, and some of his explicit statements, affirm or imply that the Gospel, although a power descended from heaven, had been prepared for on earth from the beginning of history, and had appeared only *when the fulness of the time was come ;* and that there had been certain stages of progress in revelation, a certain wisely graduated divine education of at least a portion of mankind, conditioned by their capacities, adapted to their necessities, and completed and crowned by absolute truth and a perfect life in Christ. Again, another class of passages, and especially the parables of the kingdom, declared that the manifestation of God in His Son was to be as a seed, which, although it might appear to human eye feeble and insignificant, had an imperishable and inexhaustible life in it, which would not fail to survive any treatment, to overcome all obstacles, and gradually grow and progress till the result marvellously surpassed even hope and imagination, and was to operate in humanity like leaven in meal till the whole mass was transformed.

This teaching applied directly only to man in his moral and religious relations, and did not contain even in germ a doctrine

of his industrial, scientific, æsthetic, or political development, although not only consistent with but calculated to lead on to the true doctrine thereof. Its being thus limited was fitted to secure its being understood, but failed to attain that end, as, unfortunately, from the first what had been spoken of the kingdom of God was misinterpreted as referring to the Church, or rather the kingdom of God was identified with the Church; and thus the glorious and comprehensive truth set forth in the parables of the kingdom was for centuries either ignored or sadly narrowed and perverted, and is, in fact, very defectively apprehended even at the present day.

The Gnostics, while accepting Christianity as a divine and redemptive work, sought to rise above it by explaining it on the principles of oriental speculation, and by furnishing the complete solution of all the deepest problems of religious thought, —such as, how the material is related to the spiritual universe; how the former exists, and how the latter has been developed; how evil is to be accounted for; whither all things tend; what man's place, purpose, and destiny are; and what the religions which preceded Christianity meant and effected. They touched, in consequence, upon many of the most serious themes of historical as well as of religious philosophy. But it was in a false, arbitrary, fantastic way, so perversive of historical facts and so incompatible with genuine historical generalisation, that all their daring conceptions of evolution, emanations, æons, dualism, &c., can scarcely be said to have even helped towards a clearer and truer apprehension of the notion of human progress.

The Montanists deemed Christianity incomplete even as a revelation, and proclaimed a special and more perfect dispensation, the reign of the promised Paraclete. Tertullian, the most gifted among them, applied the idea of progressive development in defence of his heresy to the whole history of religion in the following remarkable manner: "In the works of grace, as in the works of nature, which proceed from the same Creator, everything unfolds itself by certain successive steps. From the seed-corn sprouts forth first the shoot, which by-and-by grows into the tree; this then puts forth the blossom, to be followed in its turn by the fruit, which itself arrives at maturity only by degrees. So the kingdom of righteousness unfolded itself by

certain stages. First came the fear of God awakened by the voice of nature, without a revealed law; then the childhood under the law and the prophets; then that of youth under the Gospel; and lastly, the development to the ripeness of manhood through the new outpouring of the Holy Ghost, consequent upon the appearance of Montanus—the new instructions of the promised Paraclete. How is it possible that the work of God should stand still and make no progressive movement, while the kingdom of evil is continually enlarging itself and acquiring new strength?"[1] It requires to be observed that Tertullian did not refer the progressive development of religion to a continuous self-evolution, but to a continuous succession of extraordinary revelations. The great majority of the early orthodox Christians agreed with the Montanists in looking for the coming of a material millennial kingdom, an expectation which rested not only on a misinterpretation of scriptural promises, but on the feeling that the reign of evil could only be destroyed by a supernatural outward manifestation, and consequently on a want of faith in the inherent ability of Christianity progressively to transform and sanctify society.[2]

Justin Martyr and Clement of Alexandria, although taking liberal views of the relation of Christendom and heathendom, and regarding heathen philosophy as a providential preparation of the Gentiles for the Gospel, were so far from attaining to a comprehensive conception even of religious progress, that they imagined the truths taught by the heathen sages had been drawn from the Jewish Scriptures.[3] The speculations of Origen as to the course of creation and history were essentially derived from heathen sources, although greatly modified by Christian doctrines and interests. His hypothesis of a series of worlds successively burnt up and restored differs from the Hindu and Stoic hypotheses to the same effect, chiefly by his conjoining it

[1] De virginibus velandis, c. i.

[2] For the literature of this curious subject, see the articles on "Chiliasm," "Millennium," "Millennarianism," and "Pre-Millennarianism," in the Biblical Cyclopædias of Kitto, Herzog, or M'Clintock and Strong. Also Prof. A. Chiapelli's Idee millenarie dei Christiani nel loro svolgimento storico. Napoli, 1888.

[3] Justin. Apol., ii. 13; i. 46. Dial. con. Tryph., c. 48. Clemens Alex. Stromata, i. 17-19; vi. 17.

with the emphatic assertion of free-will, and, in consequence, maintaining that the worlds are not, so far at least as men are concerned, mere repetitions of one another. Fanciful as may be his supposition of the earth having been peopled by fallen angels, there is undoubtedly a certain grandeur in the way in which he conceives of all fallen creatures being on their way back to unity in God, "not suddenly, but slowly and gradually, seeing that the process of correction and amendment will take place gradually in the individual instances during the lapse of countless and immeasured ages, some outstripping others, and tending by a swifter course towards perfection, while others again follow close at hand, and some again a long way behind; and thus, through the numerous and uncounted orders of progressive beings who are being reconciled to God from a state of enmity, the last enemy is finally reached, who is called death, so that he also may be destroyed, and no longer may be an enemy."[1] At the same time, it will be observed that this doctrine is wholly derived from speculative principles, is incapable of inductive verification, is nowhere distinctly applied to the movement of human society, and, in a word, is quite unhistorical in character. Cyprian held that the world was growing old, losing its vigour and excellence, and drawing near to dissolution, and that this inflexible divine law of things was the true cause of many of the evils which his contemporaries ascribed to the impiety of the Christians towards the ancient gods.[2]

Augustine's views regarding progress will be stated in our exposition of his general theory of the course and plan of human history. Their influence is easily traceable in the 'Commonitorium adversus profanas omnium novitates hereticorum' of Vincent of Lerins. Vincent held the Scriptures to be, so far as content is concerned, a true and adequate revelation, from which nothing is to be subtracted and to which nothing is to be added, but considered that as most heretics appealed to Scripture, tradition must be called in to decide between right and wrong interpretations. But how can it do so? Only if genuine tradition can be easily discriminated from spurious, catholic tradition from heretical. This Vincent deemed

[1] De Principiis, iii. 6 (Crombie's translation). [2] Lib. ad. Demetr. iii.-iv.

could be done, inasmuch as the former is *quod ubique, quod semper, quod ab omnibus creditum est,* and which is consequently characterised by the three marks of *universalitas, antiquitas,* and *consensio.* It obviously follows that all absolute innovation in religious faith and doctrine must be condemned. Does it follow that there can be no progress therein? Vincent answers clearly and decisively in the negative. "To deny or oppose progress would show malevolence towards men and impiety towards God. The entire Church, and each believer, arise, grow, and develop, as the human body does. But progress (*profectus*) is not change of nature (*permutatio*); development is not compatible with loss of identity. Man only reaches the maturity and perfection of his being by the growth of powers which were all contained in germ in the child. Wheat should not produce tares, the rose-tree of the Catholic Church should not bear thistles. The deposit of truth confided to the Church ought to be elaborated and applied, elucidated and evolved, but its substance must be preserved in integrity and purity."[1] The theory which Vincent thus formulated, so far as it merely refers to religious progress, is that which still generally prevails both in the Catholic and the Protestant Church. So far as it is a theory as to the ascertainment of religious truth, it is chiefly confined to the former; and whatever artifices of exposition may be employed to disguise its real nature, it necessarily means that the truth or falsity of religious belief is to be determined by the extent of its prevalence; by counting opinions instead of weighing them; by abandoning the proper search of truth itself, and trying to reach it instead by discovering what has been supposed to be truth by the majority of mankind. The theory of Vincent of Lerins as to the development of the Church and Christian doctrine is, taken as a whole, substantially the same with that which, within the present century, De Lamennais has made celebrated in France, Möhler in Germany, and Newman in England.

The general conditions of life and thought in the middle ages were extremely unfavourable to the growth and spread of the idea of progress. In the abounding ignorance the past was little known, and in the abounding anarchy and confusion the

[1] xxvi.-xxx.

meaning even of the present was undiscoverable. The principle of authority was maintained in the Church and the State, in science and practice, in such a way as to discourage and condemn the hope that reason might achieve great triumphs in the future; and study and reflection were mainly confined to theology and philosophy, the provinces of knowledge in which progress is least visible. Still the idea was never completely lost. It has often been stated that in the tenth century there was a universal belief that the end of the world was to happen in the year 1000 A.D. This representation has recently been subjected to a critical scrutiny by Eiken,[1] Le Roy,[2] and Orsi,[3] and found to be an unwarrantable exaggeration. It would be still less applicable to any century earlier or later than the tenth. A conviction of the impending destruction of the world, however, was not uncommon at almost any period of the middle age. It is frequently found expressed in the writings of Gregory of Tours, Fredegar, Lambert of Hersfeld, Ekkehard of Aurach, and Otto of Freisingen.

Hugo of St Victor in the twelfth century,[4] and Thomas Aquinas in the thirteenth,[5] both recognised progress to be a universal law of things, and all knowledge to be progressive. Both also insisted that revelation had been gradually unfolded so as to suit the different requirements of different ages, and that, although it had been completed through Christ and the apostles, room had been left for continuous growth in comprehending and realising it. The man, however, who, of all medieval philosophers, saw most clearly the deficiencies of antiquity, and cherished the most rational hopes of intellectual advance in the future, was Roger Bacon. He felt the imperative necessity of subordinating theories and abstractions to facts and their history, dogmas and theology to Scripture and religion, metaphysics to experimental science. He studied Greek, Hebrew, and Arabic writers in their own languages, and had a perception of the proper nature and functions of philology and criticism, such as was extremely rare in the thir-

[1] Die Legende von der Erwartung des Weltuntergangs und der Wiederkehr Christi im Jahre 1000 (Forschungen z. Deutsch. Geschichte Bd. xiii., 1883.)

[2] L'An Mille, Paris, 1885. [3] L'Anno Mille (Rivista Stor. Ital., iv., 1887).

[4] Summa, lib. i. pt. vi., and De Sacramentis, lib. i. pt. x.

[5] Summa Theologiæ. Prima secundæ, quæst. 98, 106, 107.

teenth century. His acquaintance with physical science and his insight into its possibilities were still more wonderful. He showed the importance of mathematics in relation to such science; attained remarkable glimpses of truth on a number of points, optical, mechanical, and chemical, as to which his contemporaries were in ignorance or error; descanted on the triumphs which investigation might achieve by induction and experiment; and anticipated inventions akin to steam-travelling by land and water, balloons, diving-bells, suspension-bridges, and telescopes. With a keen sense of the intellectual poverty of his age, and a deep contempt for the prevailing scholasticism, he had strong confidence in the powers of the human mind, and looked forward hopefully to rich harvests of science and art being gained as soon as better methods of research and education were adopted.[1]

The externality and corruption of the Church produced in the thirteenth century a reaction which took more or less the form of mysticism, and which found its chief support in the monasteries, and especially among the Franciscans. It rested on the belief that a new era was dawning, in which the Gospel would appear in its purity and perfection, and men would seek and find their salvation in an entire renunciation of worldly ties and possessions, and in complete surrender to the direct internal guidance of the Holy Spirit. It originated the boldest conception of human development which had as yet appeared, that which is associated with Amaury of Chartres, the Abbot Joachim of Floris, the Franciscan General John of Parma, and his friend Brother Gerard, the author of the celebrated 'Introductorius in Evangelium Aeternum.' According to these men and their adherents, universal history ought to be divided into three great periods or ages: the age of the Old Testament or kingdom of the Father, the age of the New Testament or kingdom of the Son, and the age of the eternal Gospel or kingdom of the Spirit. In the first, God manifested Himself by works of almighty power, and ruled by law and fear; in the second, Christ has revealed Himself through mysteries and ordinances to faith; and in the third, for which the others have

[1] Opus Majus, and Epistola de secretis artis et naturæ operibus. E. Charles—Roger Bacon, sa vie, ses ouvrages, ses doctrines, d'après des textes inédites. 1861.

been merely preparatory, the mind will see truth face to face without any veil of symbols, the heart will be filled with a love which excludes all selfishness and dread, and the will, freed from sin, will need no law over it, but be a law unto itself. The theory in this form has come down to our own times, chiefly through the influence of Lessing. But the Joachimites taught it with additions, which could find acceptance only while faith in the mendicant orders was as yet unshaken by experience. For instance, the reign of the Father, they said, had lasted 4000 years, and during it the government of the Church had been intrusted to married persons; that of the Son had lasted 1200 years, and its administration had been in the hands of the secular clergy; while that of the Spirit, inaugurated by Joachim and St Francis, would continue to the end of the world, and have for its priests monks devoted to poverty, penitence, and obedience.[1]

It would not be difficult to collect from writings of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries a considerable number of partial expressions of the idea of progress; but to find clear general expressions of it, we must pass from the medieval into the modern period of history. It was only with that radical change in the attitude, direction, and methods of thought, of which the Renaissance and the Reformation were the first conspicuous manifestations, that the idea of progress could enter into the stage of development in which its significance in all departments of science and existence has gradually come to be recognised. This new era began by four illustrious men not widely separated in time—Bodin, Bacon, Descartes, and Pascal —formulating the general fact of progress in language so striking that it could no longer be overlooked.

[1] Of the literature relative to the movement associated with the name of the

Calavrese abate Gioacchino,
Di spirito profetico dotato,

it may suffice to mention Renan's essay, 'Joachim de Flore et l'Evangile Eternel," in his 'Nouv. Études d'Hist. Rel.,' 1884, and the second book of F. Tocco's ' L'Eresia nel Medio Evo,' 1884. Preger's attempted proof that none of the writings attributed to Joachim are genuine, has been satisfactorily refuted by Reuter in his ' Geschichte der religiosen Aufklharung im Mittelalter,' ii. 356-360. On John of Parma, see the article of M. Daunou in the Hist. lib. de la France, tom. xx.

II. The idea of human unity is closely connected with that of human progress. Progress implies continuity, and continuity unity. In order to be progress there must be something which progresses; for progress is an attribute, not an abstraction, and that something must remain itself under all the phases which it assumes. There are many stages between the seed and the perfect tree, the ovum and the perfect animal; but stage must so follow on stage, that the continuity is not broken, that the one individual existence is preserved throughout, or there can be no progress. In so far as phenomena of any kind are isolated, and not brought into connection with one another, or shown to be manifestations of something which has a certain individuality distinguishing it from everything else, they are unable to be brought into a progressive series. It was impossible that men could recognise that there was progress in history before they recognised that there was unity in history; that is to say, that their race, while in the ceaseless succession of generations, nations, and systems ever modifying and transforming itself, yet ever remains in essential nature the same. And only slowly, only by innumerable short stages, only owing to the consecutive and concurrent action of countless causes, has humanity fully awakened to the consciousness of its unity, and the possibility been admitted of surveying the whole of the past and present of society, from a certain single lofty point of view, and rationally co-ordinating the entire series of human events.

This unity, the apprehension of which is essential to the comprehension of history, is unity of nature, not of origin. Unity of nature may, as is generally believed, involve and prove unity of origin; but as the reality of the latter unity is still keenly contested by many on real or supposed grounds of science, it is especially desirable to remember that only the recognition of the former is needful as a condition of the philosophical study of history, only discernment enough to see a man to be a man, to have the characteristics and rights of a man. It is the perception of this unity which has been so slowly attained. And yet men have never been found without some faint sense of it. Even in the lowest stage of barbarism, they manifest by living together a sort of consciousness of the

bonds which unite them, but of course it is a very vague, loose, and feeble consciousness. The rudest savages — the Bosjesmans, for example — do not live in complete isolation, but in society; their society, however, has no chiefs, no priests, no marriages, no institutions or laws; it is a loose indefinite mixture of tribe and family, and owes the little consistency which preserves its separate existence chiefly to fear and hatred of the enemies which surround it. In all the succeeding phases of this social state—that of the tribe—men fanatically regard its interests beyond everything else, and readily sacrifice to them everything else; they do not recognise that men belonging to other tribes have even such primary rights as those to life, liberty, and property. Tribes and clans are kept together not by the mutual goodwill of their members, but by the enmity which they bear to neighbouring tribes. It is mutual hostility which consolidates them into some sort of social unity, and, no doubt, that is the final cause of so unamiable a passion prevailing so universally in the lower stages of human development. A truer and finer feeling would be less powerful, or rather savage man would not and could not entertain it; and therefore Providence makes use in order to gain its end of the passion which will be effective, although that be one which must lose its influence as mind and morality progress, as the thoughts of men are widened, and their feelings purified.

The tribe may extend into the State, and when such extension takes place it must be accompanied by a wider recognition of human unity, and a corresponding growth of feeling, as well as by a wider conception of duty. The oldest great States known to us are those of Asia and the Nile valley. In all these States only a comparatively few individuals, the kings, great warriors, priests, wealthy and high-born chiefs, have counted as individually significant, while the vast majority of the population have been either slaves, or freemen so poor and degraded that *the man* in them has been invisible even to their own eyes. These great monarchies were also so situated geographically, so locally isolated—their histories flowed in channels so far apart and apparently divergent—that the thought of a comprehensive and pervasive human unity was unlikely to suggest itself to any mind, and incapable of being convincingly verified. Hence,

except perhaps in a few individuals, there was in these kingdoms no national feeling in the form of sympathy or affection based on the recognition of community of character and interests, and giving unity to the aspirations and aims of all who composed the nation, but only in that form of senseless antipathy which history shows us that peoples rendered brutal by oppressive governments invariably cherish against each other. Since the recognition and sense of unity did not rise thus high, of course, it did not rise higher and transcend the barriers of race, of language, of government, and of territory, so as to embrace the whole of mankind and "take every creature in of every kind."

The isolation of these nations, however, although great as compared with modern European nations, was not complete: war, commerce, migrations, and religious proselytism, all did something to connect them; and through each of their histories traces of a tendency towards the apprehension of human unity as such may be detected. Egypt, notwithstanding the dislike of foreigners ascribed to its inhabitants, undoubtedly exerted a considerable influence on the development of the nations near it, and commingled or amalgamated physically and morally various originally distinct Asiatic and African peoples. It is generally admitted that M. Ampère (Rev. Archéol., v^e^. année) has proved *caste* not to have been an Egyptian institution; and whatever importance may have been attached to class distinctions in ancient Egyptian society, it was universally believed that before the judgment-seat of Osiris all men from Pharaoh to the poorest slave would be equal, and that each would receive according to the deeds done in his body, whether good or evil.[1]

It is now known that China has been much less isolated and self-contained than was long supposed, and that even the internal development of moral thought reached to a recognition of the duty of universal benevolence in one sage at least, the philosopher Mih-Teih, who lived in the fourth or fifth century before Christ, and wrote an essay expressly to prove that all the evils which disturb and embitter human society arise from the

[1] This is proved by the texts of the Funeral Ritual, the hymns, and prayers, translated by M. de Rougé. The whole of the "Book of the Dead" is translated by S. Birch in Bunsen's 'Egypt's Place in Universal History,' vol. v.

want of the brotherly love which every man owes to every other. From that essay, as translated by Dr Legge, I may quote these words: "If the law of universal mutual love prevailed, it would lead to the regarding another kingdom as one's own, another family as one's own, another person as one's own. That being the case, the princes, loving one another, would have no battle-fields; the chiefs of families, loving one another, would attempt no usurpations; men, loving one another, would commit no robberies; rulers and ministers, loving one another, would be gracious and loyal; fathers and sons, loving one another, would be kind and filial; brothers, loving one another, would be harmonious. Yea, men in general loving one another, the strong would not make prey of the weak: the many would not plunder the few; the rich would not insult the poor; the noble would not be insolent to the mean; and the skilful would not impose upon the simple. The way in which all the miseries, usurpations, enmities, and hatreds in the world, may be made not to arise, is universal mutual love."[1] It is possible that Mih's universal love may, as Dr Legge supposes, have rested on no idea of man as man, and been inculcated not as a law of humanity, but simply as a virtue which would find its scope and consummation in the good government of China. I cannot, however, think this a probable view. The doctrine of Mih was assailed by the celebrated Meng-tseu or Mencius, on the ground of leaving no place for the particular affections; yet Mencius saw with a clearness and insisted with an emphasis that man, by the very frame and make of his constitution, is a being formed for virtue, for righteousness, for benevolence, which make him also in some degree a witness to the truth of the essential unity of men.

In Indian Brahmanism this truth was and is directly denied; but the denial gave rise in the way of reaction to the grandest affirmation of it, perhaps, to be found in heathenism, that of Buddhism. Buddha is represented as animated by a boundless charity, an affection embracing every class of society and every living creature; as voluntarily foregoing for myriads of years final beatitude, and voluntarily enduring through numberless births the most manifold trials and afflictions, in order to work

[1] The Chinese Classics, ii. 106, 107.

out salvation for all sentient beings; and his law is not only announced as thus one of good news for all, but as enjoining, along with meekness, patience, and forgiveness of injuries, a love and pity which are to recognise no distinctions of race, or caste, or religion. While, however, Buddhism thus recognises in one aspect the essential unity of men, it overlooks other aspects thereof. Regarding only that side of human life which is directly turned towards the infinite and eternal, it is blind to its temporal and social sides; it enjoins universal love, not, however, that men may thereby have their whole natures and lives sanctified and beautified, but that they may be the sooner delivered from the burden of personal existence, from the ties of life and society in any form. Its logical consequence would be the conversion of the world into a brotherhood, not of men but of monks, each practising charity with a private and selfish aim, which makes it a charity without love, or a form of love without soul.

The histories of India and China have always flowed in courses of their own, not only apart from each other, but outside of the main stream of human events. A multiplicity of histories first met and commingled in that of Persia. The Persian empire extended itself over the whole of Western Asia, and into Europe and Africa; it drew together Bactria, Parthia, Media, Assyria, Syria, Palestine, Phœnicia, Asia Minor, Armenia, Thrace, Egypt, and the Cyrenaica. The voice of the great king was law from the Indus on the east to the Ægean Sea and the Syrtian gulf on the west, from the Danube and the Caucasus on the north to the Indian Ocean and the deserts of Arabia and Nubia on the south. Xerxes led the soldiers of fifty-five peoples against Greece. In Persia we see, therefore, the first great attempt at the outward realisation of unity through military conquest in the form of a universal empire; it was, however, only an attempt, and the result was no real union but a loose aggregation of nations. The empire of Alexander which displaced it, although still more wondrous, because the gigantic conception of a single intellect, the gigantic work of a single will, was of an essentially similar character, being composed of nearly the same materials connected in the same manner, and so it naturally soon fell asunder and crumbled away. Its great

service was the diffusion of the principles of Greek civilisation throughout the conquered nations.

At a first glance, Greece—so small and so divided—may appear scarcely entitled to a place in the history of the idea under consideration. The majority of her inhabitants were slaves, and until the age of Pericles the predominant and general feeling among her free men was hatred of strangers, of the barbarians; love of Greece as such, of the nation in its entirety, either existed not at all, or no farther than was involved in hatred to the barbarians. The sympathies of the Greek did not, previous to that time, go beyond his city and the little territory around it; these he loved, but he hated other Greek cities, although not so much as Persia. In the lifetime of Socrates a great change and enlargement of thought occurred. All the best minds of the immediately succeeding generation would seem to have realised more or less that the affections of every Greek ought to embrace Greece as a whole, instead of being confined to his native city; that wars between Greek cities were unnatural; that all Greek men should constitute one brotherhood or family. Yet even Plato and Aristotle were imbued with prejudices against foreigners. Their contemporaries, Antisthenes and Diogenes, the founders of the Cynic philosophy, were, however, the first in Greece to cast off such prejudices; and they did so completely, falling even into the contrary extreme. They taught that to the wise man slavery and freedom, and all social and civil regulations and institutions, were matters of indifference; that to him virtue, conformity to the law of nature, was the only and all-sufficient good; and that he could recognise no distinctions of city or nation, but must necessarily be a citizen of the world. Hence, as Zeller has well remarked, "the leading thought of their extensive political sympathies was far less the oneness and the union of mankind than the freedom of the individual from the bonds of social life and the limits of nationality." The Stoics developed and improved this Cynic doctrine, and diffused it with far greater authority and success. Zeno, Cleanthes, and Chrysippus taught that the whole race of mankind should be regarded as one great community, the members of which exist for the sake of one another, under subjection to the law of reason. Fragments which have been preserved of Menander and Philemon, the two chief poets

of the Greek new comedy, give beautiful expression to the same sentiment, showing that it had become no mere tenet of a philosophical school, but a general feeling. What had brought about so great a change in so short a time? Doubtless many causes,— the internal evolution of thought, the growth of a general refinement of feelings and manners, increased intercourse with foreigners, experience of the evils of wars and dissensions, and, above all, the reduction of the various separate states of Greece under the sway of Philip of Macedonia, followed by the wide conquests of his son the heroic Alexander. The Macedonian power broke down the last distinctions which separated Greeks from Greeks, and then proceeded to destroy those which separated Greeks from barbarians; and the later philosophy and poetry of Greece in teaching universal citizenship and brotherhood were in no inconsiderable degree the reflections of the prodigious political and social changes which resulted from the victories of Philip and Alexander. A unity so produced, however, could not be other than most imperfect; one essentially negative and abstract, empty and unreal. Men took refuge in the thought of citizenship of the world, because actual citizenship had everywhere lost its worth and dignity. Their sense of brotherhood was the result of common misfortunes, disgraces, and disillusions, and was merely a consciousness of there being in every man a something akin to every other underlying and independent of all that is outward and public in life, accompanied by a feeling of the utter hopelessness of realising this unity in actual existence, in social and political practice.

The greatest service, however, which Greece rendered to the cause of human unity has not yet been mentioned. It was that she discovered the universal principles of all high purely human culture, and embodied them in forms of almost perfect beauty, to remain as objects of admiration and models for imitation to educated men of all ages in all lands. In Greece, man felt himself for the first time conscious of his own true nature as a free rational personality; and on the basis of that knowledge he laid a foundation which still endures for all our science, for philosophy, for mathematics, physics, logic, ethics, and politics. Moreover, he there produced a sculpture, an architecture, a poetical and dramatic, an oratorical and historical literature,

which are still unsurpassed, as well as varied types of character as grand, and many achievements as glorious, as any which the world has witnessed,—a few only excepted, which have been manifestly due to a special spiritual grace.

The science, art, and literature of Greece were reflected in and imitated by those of Rome, the conquests of which thus carried Greek culture to the Atlantic and the Tay, as those of Alexander had previously carried them to the Indian Ocean and the Sutlej. But Rome, as I have already had occasion to point out, did far more than this for the idea under consideration, being the first power truly to realise a vast external unity of empire under settled law. Rome not only conquered the world by the sword, but organised it by her policy. By tenacity of purpose, valour, and discipline, practical sense and legislative capacity, she accomplished what the Persian monarchs had sought in vain to effect by hurling countless hosts against surrounding nations, and Alexander the Great by his brilliant strategy and resistless phalanx; till, although originally small as a grain of seed, she overspread the earth, ruled during many generations from the rising to the setting sun, and bequeathed laws and institutions which still live, and which promise to be immortal. Her progress was one of steady growth, of gradual incorporation, of giving and receiving, of concession and adaptation; slow but sure—sure because slow; because no step was taken which needed to be retraced, no gain made by the sword which was not secured by the statute and the ploughshare; because whatever she did, if worth doing, she did thoroughly. "When we see," says M. Comte, "this noble republic devoting three or four centuries to the solid establishment of its power in a radius of under a hundred miles, about the same time that Alexander was spreading out his marvellous empire in the course of a few years, it is not difficult to foresee the fate of the two empires, though the one usefully prepared the East for the succession of the other."

The progress of Rome was not one merely of external extension but of internal development; a growth of human thought as well as of human power. The substance of Roman history is not to be found in her military achievements, but in the elaboration and diffusion of her laws, the spread of Roman citizenship over the world, the gradual and successive incorporation of the

plebs, the Latins, the Italians, the provincials, and the nations, into the city, which originally consisted of a few patricians and their clients; a result only possible because Roman law, unlike what was designated by that name in the oriental despotisms and the Greek democracies, was a thing full from the first of living power, and so capable of immense expansion, and of adjusting itself to every change of circumstances. The Roman idea which subordinated everything to the State, may be said to have been ruined by its own successes; to have abolished itself in fulfilling itself. The greater the extension given to the citizenship, the more it lost in comprehension, in distinctive significance; and when conferred on all subjects of the empire, nearly the only thing meant by it was what had been originally most suppressed, least acknowledged, in it—the conception of human community, of men having a worth and rights simply as men. The tie of citizenship was then really done away; but that was not before a certain reverence for the natural ties which bind men together as men had grown up and could replace it. Apart even from Christianity, the course of history, the refining influence of imaginative literature, and the teaching of philosophy, especially of the Stoic philosophy, raised the Roman mind to recognise that there was a One Law, embracing all nations and all times, which no senate or people had created or could annul, and which enjoined universal justice and universal benevolence. That men are not merely citizens—that every man is debtor to every other — that they have a common nature, and, in consequence, reciprocal rights and obligations—were well-known truths in the time of Cicero, and commonplaces in the times of even the earlier emperors. The evidence for this affirmation is so abundant, that to adduce it with anything like adequate fulness would detain us too long; therefore I merely give below a few references to works in which the labour has been already carefully performed, and would venture, at the same time, specially to recommend the perusal of the passages indicated, as, from ignorance of the facts therein collected, Christianity is often represented as having exclusively originated and promulgated truths which were, intellectually at least, undoubtedly recognised in pagan Rome.[1]

[1] Janet, Histoire de la Science Politique, t i. lib. i. c. iv. ; Denis, Histoire des

By means, then, of Greek philosophy and Roman policy, the human mind in Europe rose to an apprehension of a bond of unity between all mankind independent of class and national distinctions. Buddhism has to some extent performed the same service in the south and east of Asia. It is to be remarked, however, that it has approached the idea of human unity in the opposite direction to that followed by the classical world, and has seen, as it were, only its opposite side. It has recognised the unity of men in relation to the infinite source and ultimate end of existence; but has so concentrated thought and affection on that aspect of it as to have overlooked and despised its merely temporal and civil relationships. It has accordingly done very little for man's social welfare, for political freedom, justice, and prosperity. The Greco-Roman world, on the other hand, worked upwards to the idea on its purely human side, and, indeed, mainly by the extension of the notion of citizenship. But that, too, is an imperfect view, a single aspect of a whole, both sides of which are most important. And when thus imperfectly apprehended, the idea is devoid of self-realising power; the great truths it involves cannot make their way into life, but have to remain in the state of dead abstract affirmations. This the Romans discovered by the most painful experience. The corruption of the empire was not arrested and little delayed by the growth of correct views of man's duties to man; selfishness and injustice seemed to increase, self-sacrifice and magnanimity to decrease, the clearer and more general became the perception of the beauty of universal benevolence and justice. As the sense of this contradiction between their theory and practice, between the law of duty in itself and the respect which it actually received, deepened, the hearts of men in the Greco-Roman world instinctively turned away more and more from the old State religion, and groped after another capable of satisfying the new affections and breathing life into the wider thoughts which had grown up; instinctively turned more and more to mysterious Egypt and the religious East. Through the introduction of oriental beliefs

Théories et des Idées Morales dans l'Antiquité, t. ii. (Cicéron—État Moral et Social du Monde Gréco-Romain—Conclusion); Aubertin, Sénèque et Saint-Paul, especially Deuxième Partie, ch. ix. x. and xi.; Laurent, Études—Rome, lib. iii. ch. ii. and iv.

and rites, the spread of the Judeo-Alexandrian, Neo-Pythagorean, and Neo-Platonic philosophies, the Western mind was brought into contact with the Eastern, and enlarged and benefited by the contact. It only found, however, what was really wanted in the religion which had been long providentially prepared and was at length wonderfully manifested in the land of Palestine; a religion which neither, like other religions of Asia, unduly lost sight of the finite in the infinite, nor, like those of Greece and Rome, of the infinite in the finite, but contained the principles of their reconciliation, proclaiming the universal brotherhood of man, and enjoining, at least in a general way, all the virtues which the realisation thereof implies—while, at the same time, by its revelation of one God and Father of all, one Saviour, one law, one hope, laying open the fountains of moral force needed to enable men to carry into practice their convictions of the unity, equality, and rights to love and justice, of all men.

With the conversion of the Roman empire to Christianity, the human mind may be regarded as having at length risen to the apprehension of human unity on both sides. Christian authors and teachers proclaimed with one accordant voice the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of men. What progress, then, it may be asked, had society in this direction still to make? If it had really advanced so far, could it advance farther? When the equality of all men before God, and the universal obligation of charity and justice, were explicitly acknowledged and enforced by the most powerful of conceivable considerations, was its goal, as far as the development of this particular idea was concerned, not reached? Most certainly not. On the contrary, humanity had then only set its foot on the true path, and had the whole length thereof before it. To perceive the mere general outlines of an idea is one thing, and to know it thoroughly, to realise it, which is the only way thoroughly to know it, is another and very different thing. But certainly no Christian writer, and still less, of course, any other, in the Roman empire, can be credited with having had more than a general and abstract conception of human unity. And that that was to have only a vague, partial, and inaccurate conception was conclusively shown by the false separation of secular from spiritual, the contempt for the economical virtues, the

indifference to industry, commerce, and national prosperity, the submission to despotism and slavery, the unworthy views of marriage, the honour given to celibacy, the admiration of asceticism, and the intolerance of difference of opinions, characteristic even of the greatest Christian thinkers of these times. Origen, Augustine, Basil, Chrysostom, Cyprian, Jerome, &c., preached unity, universal brotherhood, justice, and charity, in as explicit general terms as have ever been employed since; but any man who fancies them to have had therefore other than the most imperfect views of human unity, the most imperfect insight into what man as man really was, may be assured that his vocation is not that of tracing the growth of ideas. The Christian Fathers repeated what they had learned from Christ and His apostles, scattered what they had received; but that as regards the truth of human unity was only seed—*semina rerum*, not *res ipsas*.

That Christian truth could only act immediately and directly on individual life, only mediately and indirectly on social life,—that it might receive the assent of an entire nation and yet not save it from decrepitude and death,—was proved on a vast scale and in the most indisputable manner by the example of the Byzantine empire. Christianity presided over the foundation of that empire, and ruled in it to its fall, a period of more than a thousand years; and yet the result was one of the most despicable forms of civilisation the world has ever seen, the destruction of which was a gain, even although it was replaced by Mohammedan rule. The spread of Christianity in the West did certainly little to delay, and probably even hastened, the fall of Rome, which was taken by Alaric scarcely a century after Christianity had become the State religion of the Roman empire.

The old classical world was exhausted. It was only on a richer and fresher soil that the first principles of the Gospel and the highest results of Greek and Roman genius could mingle in productive union, could gradually create a civilisation in which the new, that is, the true, man would be manifested. The barbarians were needed, and the barbarians came. Their invasions broke the bonds by which Rome had succeeded, after so many centuries of exertion, in uniting together the various parts of

the world, and reduced the whole social system of which she had been the soul and centre to chaos, but a chaos necessary as an antecedent to the rise of a more natural and harmonious, a richer and freer, social organisation. There is reason to believe that no single idea of special value struck out by the Greek or Roman mind was permanently lost in consequence of the temporary anarchy caused by the successes of the barbarians, and certainty that no truth of Christianity was lost. It was the destiny of the conquerors to be in course of time conquered both by the classic and Christian spirit; and their distinctive mission to invigorate human life with the love of independence, of personal liberty, in which the ancient world had been so deficient, but without which man can never know or be his true self. Rome and Christianity both tended of their very natures to unity, the one towards civil and the other towards spiritual unity. But unity, however legitimate, is not of itself sufficient; individuality, diversity, is as necessary as unity, and is even necessary to unity, if it is to be a true, that is, not an abstract and dead but a concrete and living, unity. Individuality, independence, was, however, precisely what was most characteristic of the barbarous Germans.

Since the human mind emerged from the chaos of the invasions, it has met with many misadventures, and strayed into many wrong paths in its quest of true unity, but has never been absolutely arrested in its advance,—has always, on the contrary, got correction through adversity and instruction from its errors. Thus it welcomed the growing power of the Church, was with it in its struggles for dominion, and made of it a thoroughly organised hierarchal system which bent all things to its own purposes, and ruled with despotic sway over millions of human beings. In so doing there is no doubt that it denied in part the unity and equality of men in Christ, and established an institution which has done much to separate man from man, and to enslave the many to the few. Let us not suppose it, however, to have been guilty of mere folly in the matter. The Roman Catholic Church has indeed sinned grievously against humanity, but it has also conferred upon it some great services. In ages of violence it asserted that another law than that of brute force, the law of justice and charity, was the rightful law of all

men. In the darkest days there went up from it solemn reminders of universal duties, hopes, and terrors:—

> "Hora novissima, tempora pessima sunt, vigilemus;
> Ecce minaciter imminet arbiter, ille supremus."

It was the chief instrumentality through which "the powers of the world to come" acted on many generations, and displayed themselves as historical forces. It linked together the community of European peoples by the ties of a common creed, authority, and interests. It preserved, humanly speaking, the treasures both of divine wisdom and of Greek and Roman genius. It admitted freely into its ranks all classes of men from the prince to the serf, and, by assigning them their places according to their merits and abilities, gave a happy contradiction to all its implicit denials of human unity and equality. The ascetic and monastic ideal of life which it held forth and recommended with such wonderful success, was undoubtedly a narrow one, most unsuited for man as man, and one even which led to monstrous corruptions; yet it was also not only a natural reaction against the abounding evil in the world, but a most emphatic affirmation of the truth that the worth of human existence lies far less in enjoyment than in self-sacrifice, self-discipline, and aspiration towards the eternal and divine.

Charlemagne restored for a short time the Roman tradition of a universal civil empire, furthered the progress of the Papal idea of a universal spiritual empire, closed the era of barbaric invasion, and secured for Christianity and Latin culture their due influence as factors in the more complex civilisation which began to appear. The rapid decomposition of his vast empire into small parcels of soil, each with a few inhabitants dependent on the uncontrolled will of a petty tyrant, is apt at first glance to seem a directly and exclusively retrograde movement. It was in reality, however, a necessary stage of transition to a higher unity. It preserved and developed that love of personal freedom and sense of personal obligations and rights which the Germans brought with them merely in germ, merely as dispositions and tendencies. But for the feudal distribution of society, these dispositions and tendencies would soon have disappeared, and with their disappearance would have vanished all rational

hope of a unity to be attained, not through the mutilation and destruction, but through the comprehension and satisfaction, of man's nature. To consider the love of personal independence, the fidelity of man to man, the sense of individual honour, and respect for women, as the peculiar and persistent characteristics of the German race, is to fall into one of the grossest delusions which have been generated by Teutonic self-conceit. Greco-Roman and Christian influences required to be brought to bear on Germanic dispositions, and the circumstances of society needed to be long favourable, in order that civilisation might possess these excellences. There is a wide interval between any quality of barbarism and a virtue of civilisation. Now feudalism, although a most deplorable system, incompatible with the legitimate claims alike of authority and of liberty, and directly opposed to the impartial justice and universal charity of the Gospel, was specially calculated to foster the virtues referred to, and thereby to advance humanity in the way of self-knowledge. It rooted out and made impossible the return of the feeling so predominant in the classical world, that the individual man had no rights as against the State. It substituted for the Greco-Roman view of the relation of public to private life one just the reverse, and which, although quite as one-sided as that which it temporarily replaced, had the great merit of widening thought by bringing to light the side previously unseen. If it filled the heart of the castle lord with pride and insolence, it also trained him to self-reliance, decision of character, and prowess. It made him far more dependent for his happiness on his wife and children than ever the Oriental, Greek, or Roman man had been, and thus contributed to the moral elevation of the family. Besides, the isolated and scattered castles of the feudal chiefs were not wholly inaccessible to priest and lawyer, merchant and minstrel, to Christian truth, Roman traditions, or even Saracenic science. Life within them was not wholly uninfluenced by the neighbouring monastery or town, by the policy of pope and emperor, and the general movement of history. Under the action of these powers, feudalism in a measure civilised itself and flowered into chivalry. Out of what had been originally but a robber's den, the court of the castle, came forth courtship and courtesy, a new ideal of conduct inspired

partly by piety towards God, and partly by gallantry towards woman, sentiments of love and honour of a delicacy previously unknown, and a poetry and romance which have grown into the national literatures of almost every country of Europe.

Throughout the whole existence of feudalism, two powers —the monarchy and the Church—steadily resisted with such strength as they possessed its anarchical and anti-social tendencies. Self-interest constrained them to strive for order, for unity, and so to counteract the self-will of the nobility. In each land the struggle took a different form; but in all it left deep and ineffaceable impressions. The kings of France, confining their energies within or immediately around their own kingdom, wrought steadily on until they had concentrated all power in their own hands, and produced that extreme unity of administration which accounts for so much both of good and evil, of achievement and failure, in the history of France. The kings of England had, from the Norman Conquest, a preponderance of power which not only sufficed to hold the whole nation firmly bound together, but compelled the nobility to ally themselves with the commons, and this laid the foundation for that union of order and liberty which has been realised in a more perfect measure in England than anywhere else in the world. The emperors of Germany cherished the idea that the Roman empire still subsisted both in law and fact; and that they, as the successors of the Cæsars, were the rightful heads of Christendom, and entitled even to choose popes and invest them with their temporal sovereignty, although spiritually their subjects. The dispute between the Emperor and the Pope was the axis on which for more than two centuries European history revolved; it was productive of many and great evils to Germany and Italy, but productive also of great blessings to Europe in general. "If it had been possible," says Gervinus, "for the Empire and the Papacy to have united peaceably; if that which had already occurred in the Byzantine kingdom of the East could also have occurred in the Teutonic Roman kingdom of the West, and could the combined secular and spiritual power have rested on one head,—the idea of unity would have gained the preponderance over that of national developments; and in the centre of this quarter of the world, in Germany or

Italy, a monarchical power and single form of government would have been constructed, which would have thrown the utmost difficulties in the way of the national and human progression of the whole of Europe." Fortunately a union of the two powers did not take place. The one saved the European world from entire slavery to the other. Their long struggle favoured the rise and growth of independent thought, and, by preventing the realisation of a one-sided and external unity, furthered the cause of a full and free unity.

The Crusades contributed directly and indirectly in many ways to generate and diffuse the feeling of a common Christendom, and even of a common humanity. They united in a common sentiment, Norman and Saxon and Celt, Frenchman and Austrian, Norwegian and Italian. They were the first events of universal European significance which rested on a European public opinion. They softened in some measure the antipathies of the races and peoples which gathered themselves together to combat for a common cause. They made the baron feel more dependent on his vassals, and raised the serf in his own estimation and in that of others; while, at the same time, they strengthened the power of the Crown, and favoured the growth of the communes and free towns. They widened the range of men's ideas and tastes and desires; and they gave an impulse to science and art, and a still greater impulse to commerce. Thus, although they had their origin in fanaticism, and were accompanied with unspeakable horrors, and followed by numerous most serious evils which do not require here to be mentioned, they also undoubtedly helped in no slight degree to emancipate the human mind and educate the human heart. Intermediate between the Germanic invasions and the Renaissance, they are one of the three great medieval incidents by which the more thoughtful minds in Europe were brought to see that the unity of humanity underlies even the differences of Christianity, Mohammedanism, and heathendom; and that the love of man to man enjoined by Jesus in the parable of the Good Samaritan and elsewhere, must not be limited to the communion of believers.

To trace, however, in its whole length, breadth, and depth, the process by which, from this point to that where the present

history commences, the human mind advanced in self-knowledge, and consequent recognition of the unity in variety of humanity, would be to write the entire history of Europe throughout the intervening time. It would be to follow the development of industry in country and town, explaining how the labouring population had been affected by changes in the forms of tenure of property and by changes in the general government of society, by trade corporations and their regulations, by the Crusades, the communes, the free towns, by the advance of the industrial and fine arts, and the extension of geographical knowledge, the discovery of America, the influx into Europe of the precious metals, &c.; and, in a word, to show how the fetters on industry and commerce began to be broken one after another, honest labour to be acknowledged as honourable human work, the labouring classes to gain their human rights and recognition on the page of human history, and a *Tiers État* to arise to which kings and nobles were at length to become servants. It would be to trace the development of the arts of architecture, music, sculpture, painting, poetry, and romance, alike under the protection of the Church and in their growth to independence, and to show in doing so how the imagination of man had been educated, the sphere of his activity widened, and his history enriched with new elements. It would be to describe the toilsome progress of science, the preservation and revival of ancient learning, as well as the means and institutions devised to diffuse science and learning; and to estimate what the cultivation given to speculation and formal thought, as applied by the theologians and philosophers of the middle ages to the highest subjects, had done for the modern intellect. It would also be to delineate the long series of attempts to deliver revealed truth from the false glosses, and to emancipate the religious nature of man from the degrading thraldom, imposed by the Roman Church,—a series of attempts which issued in that great and successful movement which in the sixteenth century secured for a half of Europe the right of private judgment in religion, a right which is the condition and guarantee of all other rights and of all liberty. It would be—very specially—to trace the formation within the European unity of national individualities, since the formation of nations has un-

questionably contributed in the highest degree to a profound and exhaustive development of the human soul; while the further progress of the race in science, in art, in literature, in philosophy, and in religion, is dependent upon the preservation and the quickening collision of the resultant variety in unity. It would be necessary to do all this and more; for it is only through having exerted its forces persistently, methodically, and heroically, in all these directions and various others, that the human spirit has, to use the words of Mr Goldwin Smith, "slowly and painfully transcended the barriers interposed by dividing mountains and estranging seas, by diversities of custom and language, creed and polity, by prejudices of race and class, in its progressive realisation of the glorious truth of the universal brotherhood of man." It is only through an immense and multiform activity, long-continued and strenuous toil, protracted and countless sacrifices, that man has learned to recognise what a vast variety of manifestations, what an infinity of differences, have their ground in the essential human unity, without prejudice to aught distinctive of manhood, or to any of its fundamental rights.

As late as the sixteenth century—that in which this history commences—even the European mind had advanced but a little way along most of these routes, and had only the most defective apprehension of the general truth towards which they converge. There was, for example, nothing approaching to an adequate recognition of the true place of industry and science in human life, and of the industrial and scientific classes in human society, until the latter half of the eighteenth century. It was, we may safely say, somewhat late in modern times before humanity had displayed the variety of resources, discarded the prejudices, overthrown or surmounted the barriers, and gained the triumphs, indispensable to a perception of its own unity in multiplicity, sufficiently accurate and comprehensive to support a philosophy of history. Throughout the whole of the middle age, and even long after its close, man's knowledge of himself, man's idea of humanity, was far too vague and general, far too narrow, external, and superficial to be available and effective in so difficult a scientific enterprise.

Probably Vico was the first to recognise how fundamental

must be the idea of humanity in historical philosophy,—the first to view history with clearness, comprehensiveness, and profundity, as a whole, of which all the phases in space and time are explicable by the constitutional activities of the common nature of mankind. While not denying that the order of the civil world was providential, he was not content, like Augustine and Bossuet, simply to trace that order to the divine will, but strove to account for it as truly the work of man, and intelligible only when its changes and laws were properly referred to the powers and motives of the mind of man. Hence his 'Scienza Nuova d'intorno alla comune natura delle nazioni,' is a science of history based on the knowledge of humanity, a sociology derived from a comparative psychology. Unfortunately, even as regards central conception, it was marred by the serious errors which Centofanti, Emerico Amari, and others, have laboured to expel from it. In 1750, twenty-five years after the appearance of Vico's treatise, Turgot made an admirable application of the idea of humanity to history in his 'Discourses' at the Sorbonne. The same idea is implied throughout, yet merely implied, in Lessing's essay on 'The Education of the Human Race.' Herder's genial and eloquent 'Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menscheit' made its significance popularly appreciated, and definitively secured it its rightful position in historical science, although as regards even the mere idea, leaving much to be done in the way of definition and development. Herder has had many successors, of whom Lotze may perhaps be justly held to have been at once truest to the spirit of his teaching and the wisest amender of the defects in its letter.

The accounts of the growth of the conception of human unity given in the 'Rede' of Dr K. H. Hundeshagen, 'Ueber die Natur und die geschichtliche Entwicklung der Humanitätsidee' (1852), and the 'Vortrag' of Professor W. Preger on "Die Entfaltung der Idee des Menschen durch die Weltgeschichte" (1870), are eloquent, but too brief and slight to be of real use.

III. There is another idea—that of freedom—equally involved in history, and equally implied in the formation of a

philosophy of history. It is inseparable from the idea of humanity, and its history from the history of that idea. Man is a spirit, and therefore is not merely what he is made to be, but mainly what he makes himself to be; humanity is spiritual, and therefore not merely the passive subject of change and variation, but mainly self-formed and self-developed. The exertion by which man makes himself to be—the self-determination and self-realisation of humanity—is freedom. It is not merely negative—the absence of restraint; on the contrary, it is primarily positive—the human spirit itself possessing, revealing, and evolving itself as spirit. The freedom in which the historical student is interested is not to be confounded with the so-called "freedom of the will," concerning which there has been so much controversy among psychologists and metaphysicians. It is not a purely internal and personal fact, complete in itself apart from any external, social, or historical manifestation; but is just the freedom which is exhibited in history, and of which all history shows either the repression or expansion.

Man is not born free, but he becomes free in the measure in which he becomes man, as he becomes man in the measure in which he becomes free. And only as he becomes himself can he learn to know himself. According to the apparently paradoxical but really profound and suggestive doctrine of Vico, truth is known by us just in so far as made by us; and obviously man can only know the truth as to himself when he is himself. Humanity can only be the object of its own intelligence in the measure that it has realised itself, and revealed itself to itself, by its exertions and achievements. Self-knowledge and self-comprehension must follow on, and can merely be commensurate with, the self-production and self-development which are due to freedom.

A knowledge of the history of freedom must include a knowledge of all the ways and forms in which freedom has been restricted and repressed in the various nations and ages of the world, and of how it has gradually affirmed itself against negations, broken through restraints, and advanced towards its appropriate goal. That goal can only be a state in which humanity fully realises all its powers, or, in other words, a

state in which there are no other limits to the exercise of its powers than the very conditions of their complete and proper exercise,—the laws of nature, rationality, and morality. An individual, a nation, the race, can only be wholly free when in full possession of a true and entire self, confined by no unnatural limits, determined by no alien forces, ruled by no external master. Whatever diminishes, restrains, or injures human power — human self-control and self-sovereignty — lessens and impairs human freedom. No laws or institutions can make a diseased body, an ignorant mind, a vicious heart, free. Every increase of corporeal vigour, of command over nature, of insight into truth, of virtue, necessarily brings with it an increase of freedom.

The history of freedom is a vast history. Hegel, in his 'Philosophy of History,' Michelet, in his 'Introduction to Universal History,' and others, have treated it as the whole of history, freedom being regarded by them as "the substance and subject of universal history, and the guiding principle of its development, so that historic events are to be viewed as products of it, and as deriving only from it their meaning and character." And whether this be precisely true or not, certainly the struggle to repress or acquire freedom is pervasive of the entire history of humanity; is universal history itself—the whole bodily, intellectual, moral, political, and religious movement of humanity itself—in a special aspect. Its history to the time when historical philosophy began to appear in a distinct form, cannot be sketched here even in brief outline, as in the case of the ideas of progress and of humanity. To keep this Introduction within due limits, I must attempt merely to give some indications to sources whence a conception of its history may be drawn.

On the idea, conditions, and forms of liberty, on the right to it and what is implied therein, and related themes, a number of works have been written. Those of Charles Dunoyer,[1] John Stuart Mill,[2] Jules Simon,[3] and Emile Beaussire,[4] are perhaps the most important and interesting. Some of them contain a

[1] L'Industrie et la Morale considérées dans leur Rapports avec la Liberté (1825), and De la Liberté du travail, &c., 3 vols. (1845).

[2] On Liberty.

[3] La Liberté, 2 vols.

[4] La Liberté dans l'ordre intellectuel et moral.

considerable amount of information, even as to the growth of the idea of liberty.

One of the opposites of freedom is bodily slavery,—the condition in which a man is not the master of his own physical members and powers, but forced to exert them at the commands and for the ends of another. Such slavery, in one form or another, has occupied a large place in history.

In the savage state both licence and slavery prevail, but of liberty there is little. The savage is too destitute of the higher kinds of life to be capable of the higher kinds of liberty. As to bodily independence, different uncivilised races display very different dispositions, and are found in very different conditions; but even when savages are resentful of encroachments on their own freedom, they show little respect for the freedom of others. Ambition, pride, hatred, and other passions, lead them to war; and selfishness and avarice induce the conquerors to retain or sell as slaves numbers of the conquered whom they would otherwise have slain. In this way slavery has undoubtedly tended and served to save life, but it has also increased the sacrifice of it by supplying a powerful and persistent motive for undertaking wars, and especially small wars. Then, in the majority even of savage communities there are rich and poor, and the dependence of the poor on the rich in these communities often issues in slavery. There is, so far as I know, no good general account of slavery among uncivilised peoples. One of the best of the older accounts is perhaps Bastholm's.[1] Waitz and Gerland's 'Anthropologie der Naturvölker,' and Letourneau's 'Evolution de la Propriété' (1889), contain much material, and indicate whence it has been derived.

In societies of a nomadic or simple agricultural type, whatever be the race to which those who compose them may belong, slavery is not prevalent, and is, as a rule, of a comparatively mild character. The Aryans of India, the Romans, and the Teutons, as they first appeared in history, may be referred to in proof. Peoples in this stage may have the love of bodily independence, and the qualities required to defend and preserve it, and even to vanquish and subdue great and cultured nations, in the highest degree. Freedom, after having been driven from

[1] Historische Nachrichten z. Kentniss des Menschen, Bd. i. k. 16 (1818).

courts and cities, senates and schools, has found a refuge in deserts and forests, and reconquered the world by the arms of the rude men who dwelt therein.

From the writings of the Old Testament a fairly distinct conception can be formed of slavery among the Hebrews. Many modern critics hold the picture presented in the Book of Genesis, of the patriarchal age, its slavery included, to be not a transcript of reality, but an idealisation of the past. Whether this is so or not, can only be properly decided by the historico-critical investigations of specialists. Although the Hebrews are described as having shown extreme ferocity in the conquest of Canaan, their legislation as to slavery was, on the whole, considerate and humane. Slaves were not numerous among them, at least after the exile. Hebrew slavery has naturally been the subject of much research and controversy. The best treatise regarding it is still that of Mielziner.[1]

Slavery in the great military empires, which arose in ancient times in anterior Asia, was doubtless of the most cruel character; but we have no good account of slavery in these countries. The histories of Rawlinson, Duncker, Ranke, Ed. Meyer, and Maspero, tell us almost nothing about Chaldean, Assyrian, and Medo-Persian slavery. Much more is known as to slavery, and the condition of the labouring classes, in ancient Egypt, although of even this section of the history there is much need for an account in which the sources of information, unsealed by modern science, will be fully utilised. While in Egypt there were not castes, in the strict sense of the term, classes were very rigidly defined. There were troops of slaves, and as population was superabundant, labour was so cheap as to be employed to an enormous extent uselessly. It may suffice to refer to Wilkinson,[2] Rawlinson,[3] and Buckle.[4]

It does not seem certain that the Vedic Aryans had slaves before the conquest of India. Those whom they conquered became the Sudras, and a caste system grew up, and came to be represented as of divine appointment. The two lower castes

[1] Die Verhältnisse der Sklaven bei den alten Hebraërn, Kopenhagen, 1859. See also the art. in Herzog's R.-E., Bd. xiv., and Stade, Gesch. d. Volkes Israel, 1 Th., Bd. vii. 377-381.

[2] Ancient Egyptians. [3] Ancient Egypt. [4] Hist. of Civ., vol. i. ch. ii.

of the Code of Manu have now given place to a great many. There was not a slave caste, but individuals of any caste might become slaves in exceptional circumstances. Even before the rise of Buddhism there were ascetics who rejected the distinction of castes. Buddhism proclaimed the religious equality of Brahmans and Sudras, but not the emancipation of the Sudras. Its attitude towards the tyranny of Hindu caste was similar to that of Christianity towards Roman slavery and medieval serfdom.[1]

The various phases of slavery in Greece and Rome have been admirably described in M. Wallon's 'Histoire de l'Esclavage dans l'Antiquité' (3 vols.) The growth and influences of slavery can be traced throughout the whole history of both Greece and Rome; and in both its injustice and cruelty came in course of time to be recognised by the best minds.[2] Aristotle declared it natural and legitimate; but Zeno, Antisthenes, the poets Menander and Philemon, Seneca, Epictetus, Dion Chrysostom, and others, pronounced against it. The Stoics were its most vigorous assailants. Seneca, in particular, condemned it with a directness, clearness, and fulness which we look for in vain in the New Testament. The first Christian teachers proclaimed merely spiritual liberty and equality, the oneness in Christ of the bond and the free; they did not, like the Stoics, maintain slavery to be wrong, or emancipation a duty. It does not follow that Christianity was not by the new views which it gave of God and man, and by the new affections and virtues which it generated, a very powerful agency, or even the most powerful of all agencies, in abolishing slavery and effecting emancipation. To me it seems that in this connection the influence of Stoicism has been overestimated by Havet in his 'Origines du Christianisme;' and that of Christianity by Troplong in 'De l'Influence du Christianisme,' by Allard in 'Les Esclaves Chrétiens depuis les premiers temps de l'Eglise jusqu'à la fin de la domination romaine en Occident' (1876), and by juridical writers and Christian apologists generally.

[1] Dubois, Descrip. of the People of India, ch. vi. (Madras, 1862); Elphinstone, Hist. of India, i. 23-34, 103-109; Buckle, i. ch. ii.; Oldenberg, Buddha, 152-158.

[2] Denis, Hist. d. Théories et des Idées Morales dans l'Antiquité, t. ii. pp. 62-96, &c.; Onken, Die Staateslehre des Aristoteles, ii. Hfte., 29-36.

In the middle ages the conviction that freedom was man's natural state found frequent expression, yet the legitimacy of slavery in the actual state of the world was generally admitted by the clergy and theologians, although they opposed in some measure its abuses. The slaves connected with the monasteries were probably among the best treated, but they were also among the last to be emancipated. In the gradual doing away with slavery, or transforming it into serfdom, the growth of the spirit of Christianity co-operated with the working of economic causes: the power of the former was great, but has more frequently been exaggerated than fairly stated; while that of the latter, which was not less, has been commonly overlooked or inadequately appreciated. By the fourteenth century absolute slavery had almost entirely passed away. Medieval slavery has found a learned historian in Muratori.[1] Slavery of the most cruel and immoral kind was revived in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in America and the European colonies; was defended as a Christian institution and a means of propagating the Christian faith; and has only recently been extirpated. This later slavery does not fall within the period with which we are here concerned, but I may refer to the able and comprehensive view of it given by Ch. Comte in his 'Traité de Législation,' t. iv. pp. 106-536.

The merciless oppression of the labouring classes, the imposition of most arbitrary restrictions on industry, and the most unequal treatment of the different classes of society, continued in Europe long after the cessation of slavery strictly so called. Even serfdom was not completely swept away in England until the reign of Charles II., and in Scotland not till the middle of the eighteenth century. At the latter date more than half of the German people was in a state of serfdom. The exactions and burdens laid upon labour had a powerful influence in producing the great French Revolution. In the middle age, and early centuries of the modern period, however, literature and history show that the labouring classes were far more conscious of their rights to liberty, had much more organisation with a view to obtain them, and resisted the violence of the powerful

[1] Antich. Ital., xiv.-xv. See also Yanoski, De l'abolition de l'esclavage ancien au moyen age, et de sa transformation en servitude de la glèbe. 1860.

and the vices of statecraft much more steadily and wisely than is generally known or supposed. On this section of the history of the development of liberty, such sources of information as the following may be referred to: Sugenheim's 'Aufhebung der Leibeigenschaft,' Zimmerman's 'Der Bauernkrieg,' Rogers's 'Six Centuries of Work and Wages,' Bonnemère's 'Histoire des Paysans,' &c., Dareste's 'Hist. des Classes Agricoles,' Perrens's 'La Démocratie en France au Moyen Age,' &c.

A second form of slavery is the domestic,—the slavery of women and children to the male head of a family. It also has been world-wide, long-enduring, and many-formed. It has appeared in savage, in civilised, and practically, although not confessedly, even in Christian lands. It has been said that woman was first treated as a domestic animal, next as a slave, afterwards as a servant, and then as a minor. The generalisation is too absolute to be exact, yet there is a great amount of truth in it. Domestic slavery has naturally followed much the same course of development as personal slavery, and they have acted and reacted powerfully on each other. The well-known researches of Bachofen, Tylor, Lubbock, M'Lennan, Morgan, and others, have thrown light on the state and treatment of women among primitive and savage peoples. The light has been collected and focussed in such works as 'La Sociologie,' by Letourneau, and 'Die Menschliche Familie,' by Von Hellwald. The treatise of L. A. Martin—'Histoire de la Femme' —gives, perhaps, the best account of the condition and subjection of women among the ancient Chinese, Hindus, Egyptians, Hebrews, Arabians, &c. That of Legouvé—'Hist. Mor. des Femmes'—may be consulted along with it. The history of woman in Greece has great interest, yet much less than her history in Rome, where it began with a state of entire subjection, and ended with one of greater freedom than has existed even in Christendom until lately,—the disappearance of tutory and *manus*, the guaranteeing of dowry, and the full concession of rights over personal property. For a view of this portion of the history of the family in relation to liberty, may be read Maine on *patria potestas* in his 'Ancient Law,' pp. 133-146, and Muirhead's 'Roman Law,' 24-36, 43-49, 64-69, 115-121, 345-349, 414-419; and, for the earlier period, the

relevant chapters and sections in Carle's 'Origini del Diritto Romano.'[1]

The nature and extent of the influence of primitive Christian teaching, of the ascetic and monastic ideals of life, of Teutonic sentiment, of feudalism, chivalry, and the worship of the Virgin, on the freedom and elevation of woman, are subjects which have been discussed more or less carefully by many writers, and on which a great variety of views may be plausibly entertained. Medieval sentiment and practice in regard to woman were so full of contrasts and contradictions that the most opposite conceptions of her position and treatment in the middle ages may easily be formed, and utterly irreconcilable representations of them given. The Beatrice of Dante and the Madonna di San Sisto of Raphael are probably the highest and purest ideals of woman ever conceived by the human heart, and expressed by human art; yet the general tone of thought and feeling as to woman, as manifested, for example, even in the writings of the clergy and theologians of the times of Dante and Raphael, was coarse and base. The institutions of the middle ages which contributed most to the cause of female emancipation and improvement, affected chiefly women of wealth and rank, and did comparatively little for the poor and humbly born. The age of chivalry, as described in this reference by many historians, is scarcely less mythical than the age of gold. It can neither be dated nor located; in every country and century in which we are told it existed, the general state of womankind can be shown to have been one of enslavement and endurance of wrong, and one which knights and troubadours did much more to aggravate than to alleviate.[2]

The laws of modern states regulating the relations between man and woman in marriage have, in general, been extremely unjust to the latter. English law on the subject, for example, down to late in the eighteenth century, proceeded avowedly on the amazing theory that man and woman so became one in marriage that she lost herself in him, and he remained the sole

[1] The position of women in ancient Greece and Rome is the subject of four articles by Principal Donaldson in the 'Contemporary Review' (vols. xxxii., xxxiv., liii., liv.).

[2] Michelet, La Sorcière, 61-69; Bruce, Gesta Dei, ch. xii.

person and the sole proprietor. Thus slow has been the movement towards that equality of rights in man and woman which is implied in the true liberty of both, while clearly distinguishable from the equality of conditions inconsistent with nature and duty demanded by certain antinomian and socialistic agitators.[1]

There are higher forms of liberty than those directly assailed by physical and domestic slavery; there is spiritual liberty—intellectual, moral, and religious — involving the rejection of superstition and authorities founded on superstition, the independent exercise of reason and conscience, untrammelled research, and freedom of speech, publication, worship and proselytism, association and action, so far as the like freedom and rights of others are not thereby interfered with. Liberty of this nature, and the rights which it includes, are what are most essential to man as man, and yet they are what he has found it most difficult to attain and preserve.

Almost all the ancient civilisations were of the theocratic type. The oriental nations knew hardly any other government than that of rulers who pretended to be delegated or inspired by the gods, and who as such dictated to their subjects what they should believe and how they were to act. That government of this kind rendered important services to humanity must be admitted, but that it naturally ended in the ruin of every people which failed to rise above it is also undeniable. Regarding it, Flotard,[2] Nicolas,[3] and Lippert,[4] may be consulted.

Greece owed her glory chiefly to her intellectual independence, the freedom with which her citizens examined all the problems of life and exercised all their faculties of mind. Yet even in Greece an Anaxagoras was banished and a Socrates put to death. The Romans acted in general on the principle

[1] E. Laboulaye wrote 'Recherches sur la condition civile et politique des femmes depuis les Romains jusqu'à nos jours.' 1843. J. S. Mill's 'Subjection of Women' (1869) and A. Bebel's 'Die Frau' (1883) may be referred to as typical expressions, the one of the advanced liberal and the other of the advanced socialistic view as to woman's rightful position in society.

[2] Études sur la Théocratie, &c., 1861.

[3] De la Théocratie in Essais de Philosophie, &c., 1863.

[4] Allgemeine Geschichte des Priestenthums, 2 B.

that it should be left to the gods themselves to avenge the wrongs done to them; they were led, however, to violate it in various instances, owing to their subordination of religion to policy. The persecution of the Christians in the Roman empire is a subject which has been often and fully discussed.[1]

When the Christian Church ceased to be persecuted and acquired the power to persecute, it began to strive to crush free thought in regard to matters of religion by physical force. False views of God and man, of the efficacy of faith and the nature and conditions of spiritual life, zeal for ecclesiastical unity, priestly pride and ambition, and other causes, rendered the history of religious tyranny and intolerance a lengthened and deplorable one. The Reformers proclaimed the principle of religious freedom—the right of private judgment—so far as they themselves required it to justify their resistance to Rome, but not in its purity and universality. To hold that the magistrate ought not to employ the sword in matters of religion and conscience, seemed to them a doctrine incompatible with good government, and equivalent to an assertion that all religious opinions are morally indifferent and socially insignificant. It was, in reality, owing to the wars between Catholics and Protestants, and the contentions between the various sects of Protestants, that men were gradually forced to recognise religious freedom to be a right, and religious toleration to be a duty. Liberal thinkers and wise statesmen—men like L'Hôpital, Pasquier, Bodin, De Thou, Henry IV.—had their eyes first opened, and so at length had even most zealous religionists. To Roger Williams belongs the honour of having first made religious liberty a fundamental principle of a political community. "The conscience belongs to the individual, not to the State." Bossuet was not far from the truth when he said that, with the exception of Socinians and Anabaptists, all Protestants agreed with him in believing that the civil magistrate was bound to punish the enemies of sound doctrine. It is chiefly since his time that men's thoughts have so widened that now every unbiassed thinker holds that no religious opinion may be dealt with by secular force, and that the fullest freedom, far from

[1] Lecky's Hist. of European Morals, chap. iii.

being dangerous to truth itself, or to the general interests of society, is most favourable to them.[1]

Religious superstition and bigotry have originated numerous attempts to crush intellectual activity and independence. Of these attempts against the liberty which is the very breath of life to philosophy and science, a general account, written with vigour and animation, but unfortunately not with impartiality, will be found in the well-known work of Dr Draper, misleadingly entitled a 'History of the Conflict between Religion and Science.'

Political history has been mainly the history of the struggle for political liberty,—the liberty of all the members of a civil community to take part in its government, to elect or be elected its rulers, to have a voice in regard to the making of its laws and the transaction of its affairs, while, at the same time, legally and adequately guaranteed and protected against all invasions on their individual rights and private concerns. All so-called general histories are, for the most part, political histories; and of all the kinds of special history the political is by far the most numerous. It is needless, therefore, to give particular references to sources of information on the history of political liberty. In treating of various philosophies of history, I shall have occasion to consider the views which they give of the course of the development of such liberty, both in practice and theory. It may therefore at present be sufficient merely to mention, as specially relevant, Sir Thomas Erskine May's 'Democracy in Europe' (2 vols. 1877), and Lord Acton's two 'Lectures on the History of Liberty in Antiquity and Christendom' (1877).

The movement towards liberty has been wide as history itself. Its arrest and repression have been attempted by force, fraud, and seduction of all kinds and in all ways, but without avail. Man's nature has developed on the whole, and it has only developed in so far as his freedom has been extended and confirmed. The growth alike of reason and morality has been a growth in liberty. Religious progress also essentially means

[1] Bluntschli, Geschichte der religiösen Bekentnissfreiheit, 1867. The article on "Religious Liberty" in Schaff's 'Encyclopædia' gives a good general view of the history of the subject, and references to sources of information.

progress towards full spiritual freedom. Christianity has been a mighty force in favour of freedom, although Christian Churches have often been hostile and hurtful to it. Christianity did not explicitly condemn bodily, domestic, or political slavery, but it proclaimed and conferred spiritual liberty. It was of the very substance of its teaching that freeman and slave were one in Christ,—that every slave was Christ's freeman, and every freeman Christ's slave,—that all men were so bound to one master that they could be bound to no other. Hence the triumph of the Christian spirit necessarily implies the victory of human freedom. The freedom which humanity now enjoys is the outcome of its entire struggling and straining through the ages, with whatever of life and strength it has received, against the manifold powers which have opposed it, and tended to degrade and destroy it. The words of Bryant are as truthful as they are spirited and inspiring:—

> "O Freedom! thou art not as poets dream,
> A fair young girl, with light and delicate limbs,
> And wavy tresses gushing from the cap
> With which the Roman master crowned his slave
> When he took off the gyves. A bearded man,
> Armed to the teeth art thou; one mailèd hand
> Grasps the broad shield, and one the sword; thy brow,
> Glorious in beauty though it be, is scarred
> With tokens of old wars; thy massive limbs
> Are strong with struggling. Power at thee has launched
> His bolts, and with his lightnings smitten thee;
> They could not quench the life thou hast from heaven.
> Merciless power has dug thy dungeon deep,
> And his swart armourers, by a thousand fires,
> Have forged thy chain; yet, while he deems thee bound,
> Thy links are shivered, and the prison walls
> Fall outward; terribly thou springest forth,
> As springs the flame above a burning pile,
> And shoutest to the nations, who return
> Thy shoutings, while the pale oppressor flies."

The history of the idea of liberty is inseparable from the history of liberty itself. The collective experience and the collective intelligence of peoples have contributed much more to it than the insight and speculation of a few exceptional individuals. The reflections of philosophers and others on liberty have been to a much greater extent consequences than causes, presupposing and corresponding to a general condition of expe-

rience and attainment, desire and opinion. In the sixteenth century, theory and practice as to liberty were in all respects and relations most imperfect. The idea of its nature was as vague as the actual realisation of its nature was meagre. So far as the philosophy of history, therefore, depends on insight into the nature of liberty, a condition of its existence was still at that date wanting. Nor was it supplied until a considerable time after. The lack of it goes far to explain how, even in the age of Louis XIV., the nearest approximation to historical philosophy was the absolutist and theological view of universal history expounded by Bossuet.

V.

Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, and Ibn Khaldun are the four writers who have the best claims to special notice in this Introduction. Yet those of Plato and Aristotle are not very strong. Neither of them had any conception of a science or philosophy of history. No thinker of the Greco-Roman classical world had; not one regarded history as the subject of a science or of a distinct department of philosophy; not one had a properly scientific or philosophical interest in history. But Greece was the cradle and early home of political science. Within very narrow limits of time and space, it presented a wonderfully rich and varied field of political experience capable of being easily surveyed, and afforded the most abundant and stimulating opportunities for political reflection. A citizen of Athens, Sparta, or Thebes, was as inevitably forced into political inquiries and discussions as a French deputy or an English member of Parliament; and the multitude of remarkable events, the number of revolutions, and the variety of forms of government which he had within his range of vision, afforded a copious store of materials for political instruction and political speculation. In all probability, no people has ever been more generally and intensely interested in endeavouring to estimate, for example, the relative advantages and disadvantages of various kinds of government than the Greek, in the age of their full intellectual development. As political thinkers Plato

and Aristotle had, consequently, many predecessors. But they surpassed all who preceded them; and are the most eminent political writers not only of Greece but of the whole ancient world,—so eminent as still to afford help and guidance in political science and practice,—as " still to rule our spirits from their urns." It was only in subordination to politics that they in some measure theorised on history. In the prosecution of their political inquiries and reflections, they were led to certain generalisations as to the succession and changes of forms of government, as to the causes of the strength and weakness of States, as to the conditions of social order and welfare, which may be regarded as contributions or approximations to historical philosophy. Of these I may here be not unreasonably expected to give some brief account.

I. The philosophy of Plato undoubtedly failed to do justice to historical reality. It even tended to depreciate and discourage historical study, inasmuch as it relegated perceptions, particulars, phenomena, to the limbo of mere opinion. It taught that truth was to be found, not in the changing and individual, but in the unchanging and universal; that there is no science of phenomena, but that to reach science the mind must get above phenomena, through and beyond them as it were, into a region of types, exemplars, ideas. Were this the case, there could be no science of history; and that it is the case is the general tenor, the main burden, of Plato's teaching. Hence the Platonic theory of ideas has been on this very account assailed by Schopenhauer with characteristic vehemence. Hence it has been pronounced by R. Mayr " im Grunde eine geschichtsfeindliche Doctrin." And the charge is substantially true. But it must not be overlooked that the theory had another aspect. The ideas were also, however inconsistently, represented as the sources and reasons of phenomena. The worlds of sense and history were supposed to be in some measure participant in the ideas, and, in consequence, so far intelligible. Plato, it must be granted, unduly depreciated phenomena; but neither is it to be denied that he was very much alive and awake to the importance of observing them, with a view to deriving from them suggestions in the

dialectic search after truth. He had not the same reverence as Aristotle for past or present facts—he did not attach to them nearly the same value—but he was by no means without eye for them or interest in them. There are many indications that he had closely studied the political history of Greece.

Three political writings are commonly ascribed to Plato—the 'Republic,' the 'Laws,' and the 'Statesman.' The first is undoubtedly, and the second is in all probability, his. That he was the author of the third seems to me unlikely. The 'Republic' is grandly original in conception, and beautiful in execution. The matter of the 'Laws' is abundant and rich, but imperfectly arranged and crudely presented. The 'Statesman' is of little merit or value in any respect.

In the 'Republic' Plato exhibited his ideal of the State, his scheme of a perfect polity. It was most natural that he—the great idealistic philosopher—should have an ideal scheme of political and social organisation. He would have been untrue to himself and his philosophy had he accepted any particular existent form of government as the normal one, or had he not sought to ascertain the ideal of society, the absolute truth in politics. He was under no temptation to such inconsistency, being entirely out of sympathy with the politics and politicians of his age. He was sensible of the narrowness and harshness of the Lacedemonian State, and was decidedly opposed to the Athenian democracy. Every extant form of government in Greece seemed to him to be degenerate and corrupt,—to be tyranny, oligarchy, and mob-rule, almost at their worst. All of them appeared to him to be unjust, and consequently incapable of satisfying human nature, to which justice is essential. It was to illustrate and exemplify what justice was, that he sketched an ideal State, seeing that no actual State is just, while yet justice in the individual is unintelligible apart from its reflection in the justice of the State.

According to Plato, the State originates in want—the insufficiency of individuals to provide for themselves. Yet it is not something foreign or accidental to human nature. The true end of the State is the true end of human nature—the realisation of the good. The constitution of the perfect State is just the magnified likeness of the constitution of the normal man. The

State is an organic whole like the individual, composed of analogous parts which ought to aid one another, converge to a common centre, and co-operate to a common end. It is a unity which springs from, and is exactly similar to, the unity of the soul itself.

In the State there ought to be three orders of men. The first is the order of operatives, which comprises the two classes of artisans and labourers. Its function is to minister to the wants of the community, and its motive is self-interest or gain. It is not, properly speaking, a body of slaves. Plato did not wish slaves in his commonwealth; he held that Greeks ought not to enslave Greeks; and although he allowed that there should be a few barbarian slaves, this was permission, not injunction. It is only to the operatives that he concedes the possession of private property. He saw that they needed the stimulus of self-interest in order to perform the labours expected of them, and therefore confined communism to the two higher orders. Of these the one immediately above the operatives, is that of the guardians or warriors. Their function is to repress internal revolt and to repel foreign aggression, and their motive is the love of glory. They must be not only spirited, swift, and strong, but thoughtful, temperate, and despisers of wealth; are to be carefully trained in body and mind with a view to the formation of these qualities; and are to be guarded against the temptations of their station by holding property, women, and children in common. The third or highest order in the State is that of the rulers or magistrates. It is selected from the second order, and prepared for its duties with special care. It consists not of priests, as did the ruling class in the oriental theocracies, but of sages, with clear insight into the wants of human nature and society and how they were to be supplied, somewhat like those who composed the Pythagorean brotherhood which ruled in Croton and other cities of South Italy. Each of the orders of the State has a characteristic quality or virtue: the operatives—temperance; the guardians —courage; the magistrates—wisdom. Without any of these a State cannot exist; without their prevalence it cannot flourish. But there must also be a principle or power which belongs not primarily or peculiarly to any one order, but must of its very

nature pervade the whole so as to harmonise and unify all its parts and properties, orders and qualities; and this is none other than justice, the virtue which determines the true relation of all things and persons to one another. Precisely so is it in the soul. In each individual mind there are three distinct elements — reason, will, and appetite — corresponding to the three constituent classes of the civic community — the rulers, guardians, and operatives. And as the wisdom of the city dwells in its rulers, that of the individual dwells in his reason; as the courage of the city is in its guardians, that of the individual is in his will; as the temperance of the city lies in the self-restraint and submission of its operatives, that of the individual lies in the control and subjection of his appetites; while justice in the individual, as in the city, resides in all the parts equally, existing only in so far as each part performs its own function without encroaching on the functions of other parts.

Plato perceived with the utmost clearness that the character of a State must depend on the characters of the individuals who compose it; that a city can be no better than are its citizens; that a perfect republic supposes thoroughly virtuous men. No charge against his scheme can be less applicable than the common one that he hoped to make men good and happy by laws apart from morals. In his eyes the problem of government was mainly a moral, and therefore mainly also an educational problem. He acknowledged that the new social order which he desired to introduce, required a new generation of persons formed by a new system of education implying a radical change in Greek art, morality, and religion. The plan of education which he sketched assumed throughout the political revolution contemplated to be inseparable from a theological, ethical, and even literary or aesthetic revolution. It was of a most comprehensive character, and is still instructive and suggestive. It subordinated all that influences human life and all social activities to the supreme art—that of the true statesman.

Plato's love of unity led him to sacrifice individuality, his sense of the evils arising from self-interest to recommend the abolition of private property and the family, his dislike of the excesses of liberty to advocate an unnatural equality. He re-

quired that at least the upper classes of the State, the full citizens, should live wholly for it,—should see and hear, feel and act, as it were, only in common,—should have no separate or selfish interests. Perceiving that this end could not be attained except through communism, as regards both goods and women, he laid down rules for establishing and maintaining a communistic system, for guarding it against abuses and deriving from it all the advantages which it can yield. Women he would emancipate and equalise with men, by giving them the same education as their male companions, relieving them from domestic labours, and assigning to them public duties. Although the Platonic communism is in various particulars offensive to the moral sense, its general moral spirit is earnest, elevated, and even severe. It contemplated not the indulgence but the subjection of sense and passion, not the pleasure of the individual but the good of the society.

Of special interest to the historical philosopher are the eighth and ninth books of the 'Republic.' The exposition there given by Plato of the variety of forms of government, of their distinctive principles, of the excesses and defects peculiar to each, of the general order of political change in each and from one to another, and of its causes, laid the foundation for all subsequent theorising on these points. Aristotle, Polybius, Cicero, the author of the 'De regimine principum,' Machiavelli, Bodin, Vico, Montesquieu, and all their followers, have built upon it.

The picture which Plato had drawn of an ideal State was that of a true aristocracy, and this is presented in the 'Republic' as the only normal polity. The distinct forms of government deviating from it are four: timocracy (exemplified in Sparta and Crete), oligarchy, democracy, and tyranny. They are so many stages of departure and degeneration from the ideal, and are produced by so many corruptions of the minds and manners of the citizens. Mr Newman's statement, however, regarding this portion of Plato's work is so excellent, that I may, to the advantage of my readers, content myself by quoting it.

"The review of actual constitutions given in these books is designed to show that all States other than that in which justice reigns are unhappy, and increasingly unhappy the further they are removed from the ideal model, and it naturally places them before us in a

sombre light. The Lacedaemonian State still retains a few features of the ideal community; the distinction of social functions (or justice) so far survives there that the soldier is marked off from the cultivator and trader; the old respect for magistrates, the old military habits of life, the old interest in γυμναστική also survive. But the third class has been enslaved, separate households and property have been introduced, the class of 'wise men' has been corrupted and has lost its hold of power. The State is in the hands of men in whom the spirited element rules, contentious and ambitious men (φιλόνεικοι καὶ φιλότιμοι). The *régime* is one of perpetual war, and love of money has come in with the decline of communism. In the oligarchy the money-getting spirit has won complete mastery. Rich men rule over spendthrifts whose purses they have drained: all but the rulers are poor. Functions are no longer distinguished; the soldier is also a cultivator or a trader. The oligarchical State is weak for war, for it is really two States,—a State of the rich and a State of the poor—and it does not arm its poor. It is in the oligarchy that the drone, stinged or stingless, or in other words, the idle spendthrift, is first engendered. Democracy is rather the rule of the stinged drones than of the many. There are three classes in a democracy: the drones, stinged and stingless; rich money-making orderly men; and a large body of poor labouring men, who seldom assemble together, but are all-powerful when they do. The drones of a democracy are far more formidable than those of an oligarchy, being now admitted to office, and they plunder the rich for the benefit of the poor. This is one feature of a democracy; another is its excess of liberty. A democracy is organised anarchy. We do not learn why the supremacy of the third class (the χρηματιστικοί) should be accompanied by this excessive impatience of control. Anarchy leads by a natural reaction to tyranny. The people loves to have a champion; democracy commonly means the supremacy of an individual; and the champion easily passes into a tyrant. Many of the touches in Aristotle's well-known picture of tyranny will be found to have been drawn from Plato's sketch of the tyrant, if the two are compared. Plato speaks throughout of oligarchy, democracy, and tyranny, as if there were only one form of each, and that the most extreme form. He is naturally led by the aim he has in view to make the worst of each of these constitutions. We must not look for scientific exactness in these vigorous sketches, which have a perennial truth and value; Plato's aim is rather to show the misery of misrule than to trace with accuracy the path of constitutional change, or to reproduce every *nuance* of the various constitutions. When Aristotle, at the close of his book on political change, brings his unrivalled knowledge of the facts of constitutional change in Greek States to bear on Plato's brilliant series of dissolving views, we feel that his matter-of-fact criticisms, however cogent they may be, are rather thrown away."

In one passage of the 'Republic' (iv. 12) Plato makes a very remarkable extension of the psychological analogy and historical generalisation on which his political ideal is so largely based. He indicates that what he has said of the orders or classes of men in a city also applies to the nations of the world; that if the various races be viewed in relation to each other, intelligence will be found to prevail among the Greeks, courage among the Thracians and the Scythians (the Northern peoples), and the love of gain among the Phœnicians and Egyptians (the Southern peoples. This was an approximation to regarding the world of nations as one naturally fitted to be a vast organic whole, a city of humanity. It was, however, only a transitory and exceptional glimpse of a far-off truth, and passed away unimproved. In the delineation of the ideal State Plato had merely in view a Greek city, or at most the aggregation of Greek cities, but not a confederation of them, still less a Greek nation, and least of all a rightly inter-related system of nations, a harmonious realm of humanity.

The ideal exhibited in the 'Republic' had obvious and great defects. The consideration given to the order of labourers, for instance, was manifestly insufficient. Those who composed this order were assumed to be so possessed by self-interest as to be fit only for industry or trade; and when it had been laid down that they ought not to be allowed to take part in public functions, but should be kept in obedience to their betters, all that was essential to be said regarding them was supposed to have been said. This method of dealing with a most important portion of the complex problem which Plato had before him, deprived his solution of it to all title to completeness. Then, as regards the citizens in the proper and full sense of the term, his proposals to abolish private property and the family are liable to objections which far outweigh any reasons that can be urged in their support. Further, the distinction of the orders in the State was drawn much too sharply and deeply. These orders, as described by Plato, are not indeed castes; they are not based on hereditary differences; the lowest is not composed of slaves, and the highest is drawn from that below it; but the individual is so merged in his order as to be stripped of much of his manhood. The truth that a man is not to be

treated merely as a trader, a soldier, or a ruler, but also as a man, with all the powers and rights of a man, is ignored and virtually denied. Perhaps the chief defect of all is the one which it was most difficult for a Greek thinker in the age of Plato to escape—a great and cruel sacrifice of the individual to the State. But on this, as on the other defects of the Platonic ideal, I have no need to dwell.

Plato was fully aware that his ideal of a best State was very unlikely to be realised so long as Greek thought and morality continued to be what they were. There was no inconsistency, therefore, in his drawing up a scheme of a second-best State. This he did in the 'Laws.'

Here he acknowledges it useless to demand in existing circumstances community either of women or property, and insists merely on the State regulation of marriage and the equality of wealth. He also lays far more stress on religion and far less on philosophy than in the 'Republic.' But all that we require to note in the 'Laws' is the view given of the development of society and government. The earth is supposed to be of immense age, and its rational inhabitants, with their arts and sciences, to have been repeatedly destroyed by physical catastrophes. Human history is represented as having since the last deluge passed through these stages,—(1) single families of shepherds and hunters, with pure and simple manners, and without written laws; (2) primitive societies under patriarchal rule; (3) early city life, based on agriculture, in which a common legislation harmonises opposite customs, and royalty or aristocracy takes the place of the patriarchate; (4) the rise of maritime cities, with commerce, war, and sedition as consequence; and (5) the establishment of States, like the Lacedæmonian and Cretan, with constitutions of a mixed and tempered nature. In the 'Laws' democracy and monarchy are represented as the two primary or "mother" forms of government, and the best form as one in which the distinctive principles of both, authority and liberty, are so combined that what is true is preserved, and the special dangers and excesses of both prevented. In it all parts of the State are regulated by reason, and there is no injustice or oppression. It is a unity in which all true principles are concili-

ated and co-ordinated. Compared with it royalty, aristocracy, democracy, and tyranny are not "constitutions" but "factitious coteries" (στασιωτεταὶ).

The 'Statesman,' although probably not Plato's composition, is Platonic in its general tenor. Its aim is to ascertain the nature of the true ruler. The result arrived at is to the following effect. The true ruler is the same man whether called master, economist, politician, or king,—the man who governs with the consent of the governed, but according to his own knowledge and insight,—the wise man whose policy rests not on sophistry but on genuine philosophy. Regal government is a science—a judicial and presiding science—which no mob of persons can acquire or apply. The philosopher-king will reform his subjects by a most careful and comprehensive system of education, and deal with the diseases of society as the physician does with those of the body, not sparing the patient pain when it is needed. Only such a king can restore society to the healthy and happy condition in which, according to the ancient myth, mankind lived, when under the immediate guidance of the gods, in the cycle of Chronos. The myth of world cycles set forth in the 'Statesman' may be of theological and philosophical interest; but it is of no value as an historical hypothesis. It only requires to be added that in the 'Statesman' governments are divided into monarchy, of which the perversion is tyranny; aristocracy, of which the perversion is oligarchy; and democracy, which is good or bad. To the corrupt form of democracy Polybius perhaps first applied the term "ochlocracy." The distribution of governments given in the 'Statesman' is a merely formal classification. No attempt is made to trace the historical relationships of the kinds of government enumerated to one another.[1]

II. Aristotle was as far as Plato from perceiving history to be the subject of science or philosophy. Had he conceived of the

[1] Among the host of Greek scholars who have treated of the political, social, and historical theories of Plato, it may be sufficient to name Hermann, Stuhr, Zeller, Hildenbrand, Oncken, Janet, Fouillée, Grote, Jowett, L. Campbell, Newman, &c. On the 'Statesman' see the Études sur le Politique attribuée à Platon, par M. Huit (C. R. des Séances et Travaux de l'Acad. des Sc. Mor. et Pol., Oct.-Nov. 1877 et Janv.-Fév. 1888).

possibility of a philosophy of history he would not have maintained that "poetry" (epic poetry) "is more philosophical and earnest than history." His argument for this conclusion rests wholly on the assumption that history treats only of the particular, multiple, and isolated,—that it is devoid of unity and unconcerned with the universal. But this is as essentially an untrue and unworthy view of history as that implied in the Platonic doctrine of ideas. In reality, philosophy can never exhaust the truth and significance, or art fully disclose the earnestness and pathos, of history. Epic poetry is only the artistic expression of the same kind of unity, and the suggestion of the same kind of universality, as are to be found in history itself. It is philosophical only in so far as it is a revelation of the spirit which pervades human life in suffering, struggle, and achievement.

Aristotle saw, however, with singular clearness, the importance of history to political science and practice. He regarded politics as having two sources, ethics and history, the latter supplying it with the matter of experience needed for correct theorising. He sought as a political teacher to master and utilise all past political experience. He made a close and detailed study of the history of Greek governments. He even compiled a "Collection of the constitutions of Greek cities," which summed up the results of his investigations into a hundred and fifty-eight *πολιτεῖαι*. After this work had for many centuries been supposed to have been irrecoverably lost, the portion of it which related to Athens came to light, although not unmutilated, in 1890, and is now before the public as edited by Mr Kenyon It consists of two sections. The first of these (ch. 1-41) is a sketch of the constitutional history of Athens, and the second (ch. 42-63) is an account of the means and processes of government. The former is of great historical interest. It seems almost to entitle us to call Aristotle the father of constitutional history. It traces the constitution of Athens from its first beginning through ten stages of development into its eleventh and last phase of existence, the re-establishment of democracy after the expulsion of the Thirty and their successors. The vision, the spirit, and the method of a truly scientific historian are conspicuous in the brief but profound and dispas-

sionate account which Aristotle has therein given of the rise and fall of the most interesting democracy which has ever run its course on earth.

For a knowledge of his historical generalisations and deductions, however, we must still have recourse to his 'Politics.' It contains ample evidence of the comprehensiveness and thoroughness of his investigations. From the solidity and massiveness of the political system which it delineates we can discern with what care and labour and mastery of method the foundations had been laid and the materials extracted and tested. It was not merely the constitutions of Greek cities which had been studied; inquiries had been instituted even into the customs of barbarous tribes. The whole social life of mankind, so far as credible knowledge of it was accessible to him, seems to have been closely scanned by the immortal Stagyrite. It is not too much, in fact, to claim for him the honour of having studied politics according to the historical method, and anticipated "comparative politics."

The historical method may be abused. Probably most of those who profess to follow it suppose that it will take them farther than it can. It is necessarily inadequate to the proof of natural law or scientific truth. It can only reach historical truth—only show that such and such events have taken place in such and such an order; it can never establish the naturalness or justice of the order. Aristotle sometimes overlooked this. History showed him that slavery had been universal in the ancient world, as much so as the family or the State, and he inferred that slavery was a law of nature,—that it was natural in the sense of normal and right. Every inference of the kind must be erroneous. No amount of history is sufficient to prove any institution to be a law of nature, normal, right. All that history can show regarding any institution is how long and how widely it has existed.

Aristotle, however, being no mere empiricist, did not trust to the historical method alone in politics, but combined it with the teleological. He traced the course of things in order to determine the nature of things; but he was guided in his manner of doing so by a general conception of their ends, holding that the nature of things is the realisation of their ends.

To trace the development of things was regarded by him as a means to their knowledge, yet as only possible in the light of a certain knowledge of their natures and ends. Hence he, too, like Plato, elaborately endeavoured to delineate the ideal of a best State. Three books of the 'Politics' (iii., vii., viii.) are devoted to the task. But the ideal delineated is not claimed to be that of the absolutely best. There is no government which is the best for all races in all circumstances. Every actually best government must conform to actual conditions and relations; and the actually best, the best practicable in definite circumstances, is that which the practical politician must always aim at realising. The ideally best State is, therefore, only a generally best, and can only be described in a general manner. It is the State so organised as to enable the citizens to live in the best and happiest way. To this end it must be a city of limited size, salubriously situated, near enough the sea to have a harbour, but not so near as to attract numerous strangers. It must have slaves to till its soil and man its navy. All engaged in trade and commerce should be excluded from a share in its government. Each citizen ought to be a landowner, but not very rich, and entitled to take part in public affairs when of ripe age. The youths are to be subjected from the seventh to the twenty-first year to a course of instruction fitted to make them efficient soldiers, capable citizens, and virtuous, cultured, thoughtful men. Religious worship is to be endowed and regulated with a view to the promotion of the general good.

Aristotle made no attempt to draw any general plan, or to form any general picture of human history. He did not enunciate any general law of historical development. But he was keenly interested in the political history of Greece, and that he saw to be a natural process, every stage and change of which could be explained by their social antecedents. Man is represented as by nature a social being, a political animal. Society is not a mere outgrowth of egoism, or a mere invention of individuals. Individuals can no more exist without society than society without individuals. The first form of society is the family; out of it arises the village community; then from that grows up the State. Hence the earliest form of political government

is the patriarchal or regal; the sort of rule which is characteristic of the family is continued into the village, and thence passes into the State.

The State itself has various forms, which are all unstable, and consequently society is subject to many revolutions. Aristotle's chief contribution to historical science is to have so successfully worked out the theory of these revolutions. Plato had indeed already presented it ingeniously and grandly; but Aristotle, with larger knowledge and a more critical judgment, tested Plato's conclusions by comparison with the relevant facts, reaffirmed or rejected them, added others of his own, and in all respects strengthened and improved the doctrine. His classification of governments rests on the two principles—that government may be in the hands of one, or of a few, or of the many, and that it may be exercised either for the common good or for the advantage of the rulers. Hence each form of government may be good or bad, and good or bad government may have three forms. Thus the States or forms of government are these six—monarchy, aristocracy, and polity (the constitutional republic), and tyranny, oligarchy, and democracy. Each has its peculiar advantages and disadvantages, facilities and difficulties, &c., which are described. Monarchy might be the best could the perfect king be secured, but that is very improbable. Aristocracy, if pure, will also be excellent, but it is seldom found uncorrupted. The polity is the best generally attainable government. Tyranny is the worst form of government. Democracy is never good, but it may be the least bad, and will become a necessity whenever wealth abounds and the trading classes acquire influence. A government which would endure must avoid one-sidedness, the excessive assertion of its own particular principle or character; a democracy must not be too equalitarian, an oligarchy too exclusive, or a tyranny too despotic. Political stability requires moderation; the more wisely mixed a political constitution is, the more durable it will be. Aristotle exhibits the general and special, internal and external, causes of political revolutions; dwells on the kinds of revolution peculiar to each form of government; and indicates the various means by which political stability may best be secured. He has neglected to trace the

influence both of war and religion in effecting political change. It may be noted that by his theory of the three powers or functions of government—the legislative, executive, and judicial—he anticipated Montesquieu, and by his reflections on tyranny the system of Machiavelli.

Aristotle's vindication of the principle of self-love or element of individuality, of the family, and of property, against the attacks of Plato, may justly be regarded as a service rendered to historical as well as to political truth.

Like Plato, he had no conception of a nation in the higher sense, and consequently no anticipation of the part which nationality was to play in the history of the world. Like Plato, he supposed the arts and institutions of civilisation to have been many times invented and lost. He modified the generalisation of Plato as to the characteristics of the races of mankind, ascribing to the northern peoples courage, to the eastern peoples intelligence, and to the Greeks the combination of courage and intellect.

What Aristotle did for the history of philosophy should also be here called to mind. The history of philosophy and the philosophy of history are so intimately connected, that a direct service to the former must be at least an indirect service to the latter. But Aristotle was the first to survey the history of philosophy with a philosophical eye. By the way in which he traced in his 'Metaphysics' the development of Greek speculation through the systems of his predecessors, he established a right to be regarded as the originator of the philosophical method of studying and presenting the history of philosophy.[1]

III. Christianity assumed and involved a theory of history. In the writings of St Paul and various of the Christian fathers, the theory attained to partial expression; in the 'De Civitate Dei' of St Augustine it found its first general statement.

Augustine was one of the greatest and most influential personalities who have appeared in the whole history of the

[1] On the political, social, and historical views of Aristotle it may be sufficient to refer merely to the works of Oncken (Die Staatslehre des A.) and Newman (Politics of A.) My remark relative to the Metaphysics, B. xiii. xiv., is not meant to imply that Aristotle gave an accurate account of the early Greek philosophies. It refers simply to his mode of interpreting and exhibiting them.

Church. He was splendidly endowed both intellectually and spiritually. His rich and powerful mind contained qualities which are seldom united,—fertility of imagination and keenness of judgment, speculative subtilty and rhetorical fervour, introspectiveness and practical energy, vehemence and tenderness. He passed through the most varied phases of experience; had been Aristotelian, Manichean, Sceptic, Platonist, and Neo-Platonist, before he surrendered himself to the guidance of Christ and Paul; and when converted, gave himself to the service of his new faith with passionate devotion. He was saint, philosopher, orator, man of letters, man of counsel, man of action. More, perhaps, than any of the fathers, of the schoolmen, or of the reformers, he has influenced the doctrinal development of Christendom.

The 'De Civitate Dei' is his most elaborate and probably his most valuable work,—the one which cost him most toil, and gives the most complete conception of his abilities. It was begun about 413, and not finished before 426. The resolution to write it was occasioned by the accusations brought against Christianity, after Rome had been captured by Alaric and the Goths. That event led many to think and say that the old religion of their fathers under which Rome had flourished and become the mistress of the world, was better than the new one, under which she had declined and become the prey and scorn of barbarians. Augustine sought to repel the reproach. He traced the causes of Rome's fall to the vices of paganism, and ascribed what remained to her of good to the saving virtue of the Gospel; and over against the earthly ideal which she represented he set the divine ideal represented by the Church of Christ. The great work in which he did so is not, as Ozanam and others have said, a philosophy of history, nor even an attempt at a philosophy of history; it is properly neither philosophical nor historical, but theological — a polemic against paganism, and an apology for Christianity of remarkable breadth and elevation of design, of remarkable vigour and skill of execution. It contains, however, a nearer approximation to a philosophy of history than will be found in any other patristic or scholastic treatise; and a statement of the characteristic principles of the historical theory set forth in it may here be reasonably demanded.

They may, perhaps, be thus concisely reproduced. (1.) The human race was created less than six thousand years before the capture of Rome by the Goths. All documents which assign to it a greater antiquity than the Biblical records (as interpreted on this point by the Eusebian chronology) are mendacious; and all the theories which, like that of Apuleius, represent men as having always been, or which, like that of some of the Stoics, affirm the perpetual revolution of all things in cycles which bring men with the rest of the world round again to the same order and form as at first, are foolish. Why men were not created sooner is an inconsiderate question, which might be put with the same relevancy and force no matter when they were created (lib. xii. cap. 10-20).

(2.) The human race is a single species; all its members are descended from one man, and therefore bound together, not only by similarity of nature, but by ties of kinship. In that one first man the whole race was comprehended, and in him God foresaw what portion of it was to live according to the Spirit, and obtain eternal life, and what to live according to the flesh, and incur eternal condemnation (xii. 21 *et* 27).

(3.) God who has everywhere impressed on nature regularity, beauty, and order—who has done everything in the physical world according to number, weight, and measure—who has left not even the entrails of the smallest and meanest living creature, the feather of a bird, the little flower of a plant, or the leaf of a tree, without its exquisite harmony of parts,—cannot have left the course of human affairs, the growth and decay of nations, their victories and defeats, unregulated by the laws of His providence.[1] The vicissitudes of empire can have their reason neither in *chance*—*i.e.*, the absence of a cause, or the action of causes which operate in no intelligible order—nor in *fate*, if by fate be meant what happens of necessity independently of the will of God; but only in that will itself, in a divinely foreordained plan embracing all things and times, yet not inconsistent with men doing freely whatever they feel to be done by them simply because they will it (v. 1, 8-11).

[1] The beautiful passage (v. 11) partially translated in the above sentence must, I think, have suggested another equally beautiful in Herder's Preface to his 'Ideen.'

(4.) The human race, naturally one, had its unity broken by the fall or sin of Adam, from whom have issued in consequence two kinds of men, two societies, two great cities; the one ruled by self-will and self-love, the other by the love of God and man,—the one subject to condemnation and destined to eternal misery, the other under grace and certain of eternal felicity. Outwardly, visibly, bodily, these two societies or cities of men may be confounded; but inwardly, really, and spiritually, they are essentially and eternally distinct and hostile. No other division of men can compare in importance with this; and to it all other divisions, whether based on distinctions of speech, race, or government, must be subordinated (xiv. 1, 28, xv. 1).

(5.) Man has been endowed with a marvellous capacity of progress, and his genius, partly under the stimulus of necessity, partly from its own inherent inventiveness, has devised and elaborated countless arts; has made amazing advances in weaving and building, agriculture and navigation, in pottery, painting, and sculpture, in the means of destruction and the appliances of healing, in exciting and satisfying appetite, in the communication of thoughts and feelings, in music and musical instruments, in measuring and numbering, in the knowledge of the stars and of the rest of nature, and in philosophical subtlety (xxii. 24, sec. 3).

(6.) Like the education of an individual, that of the race, as represented by the people of God, has advanced through certain epochs or ages, in order that the human mind might gradually rise from temporal to eternal, from visible to invisible things (x. 14). Augustine has made great use of this idea, that the development of humanity is analogous to that of the individual, while at the same time aware that the comparison or parallelism was not absolutely exact. Indeed he has in several of his works distinctly pointed out one important respect in which it fails—viz., that while age in the individual is weakness, in humanity it is perfection. He less distinctly felt, although not quite unconscious of it, that different periods may coexist in the development of the race, while they must necessarily be successive in that of the individual.

(7.) The epochs of history are sometimes regarded by Augus-

tine as two, sometimes as three, and sometimes as six. The twofold division is that into history before, and history after Christ; the time of preparation for the Gospel, and the time of its diffusion and triumph. The threefold division is into the youth, manhood, and old age of humanity, or the reigns of nature, law, and grace. And the sixfold division is essentially a further application of the principle which underlies the threefold division, although also referred to a fanciful analogy between the epochs of history and the days of creation, which has often been reproduced since by writers who have allowed imagination to master reason. The epoch of youth is characterised by the absence of law, and comprehends the two periods of infancy and boyhood. In the first, which extends from Adam to Noah, man is absorbed in the satisfaction of his physical wants, and soon forgets whatever happens to him; in the second, which extends from Noah to Abraham, the division of languages takes place, and memory begins to be exercised in recalling and retaining the past. The manhood of the race, or reign of law, extends from Abraham to Christ. It is marked by the growth of reason and of the sense of sin. The spirit struggles with the evil in the world, and through defeat is made conscious of its weakness and depravity. This epoch may be regarded as embracing three periods: the first reaching from Abraham to David; the second from David to the Babylonian captivity; and the third coming down to the birth of Christ. In the course of it flourished the two great heathen empires of Assyria and Rome, of which all other heathen kingdoms may be viewed as appendages. The old age of humanity, or reign of grace, is the whole Christian era. It is the time in which the Church is enabled through the power of the Spirit to conquer the world; and it will last until the victory is complete, and the saints inherit the earth in eternal blessedness. No fewer than five books of the 'De Civitate Dei' (xv.-xix.) are devoted to trace through these various epochs of time, the growth and progress of humanity in its two great divisions, or, in other words, the fortunes of the heavenly and earthly cities: but, although full of theological interest, there will be found no signs in them of the presence of either the spirit or the method of historical science; indeed, they consist mainly of comments and conjectures on the Biblical

narrative. The earthly city and its history get little attention and still less justice. The history of the heavenly city itself, although discoursed of in these books at great length, is not divided into an orderly series of periods, or stages of development. The division which I have just described can, at the most, be only said to be implied in the exposition given in the 'De Civitate Dei.' Its explicit statement, the definite limiting and characterising of the periods, I have had to take from a much earlier work, the 'De Genesi contra Manichaeos' (i. 23).

(8.) Another theorem of St Augustine is, that although out of the city of God, or apart from true religion, there can be no true virtue, although all that is not of faith is sin, and the natural virtues of heathen peoples must, in consequence, be only apparent virtues, still such virtues may merit and receive increase of dominion and other temporal rewards, as well as serve as examples and incentives to Christians. Of this the grand proof in his eyes was Rome; and he has insisted with singular eloquence that the ancient Romans deserved for their industry, moderation, freedom from luxury and licentiousness, skill in government, and even desire of glory—since that, although a vice in itself, restrained many greater vices—to be raised to the height of power which they reached; and that the heroic deeds of Brutus and Torquatus, of Camillus, Mucius, and Cincinnatus, the Decii, Pulvillus, and Regulus, might well humble even the most devoted of the followers of Jesus (vi. 12-20).

(9.) The city of God, which has from the first grown up alongside of the kingdoms of this world, will outlast them all; and although they have often despised and oppressed it, will appear invested with immortal beauty and honour when their glories have been extinguished for ever. Immutable and invincible amidst all the instability, agitation, and strife of human things, it is continually drawing into itself its predestined number of inhabitants out of all nations, tribes, and peoples. When the unknown hour arrives which sees their number completed, the last of the elect passed from the city of the world into that of God, then cometh Christ to judge the quick and the dead, and finally to separate the good from the evil; and at His word, above the ruins of those cities of the world that have passed away into the darkness of their eternal doom, there rises

in the light of God's love, on a new and purified earth, a new, peaceful, and perfectly happy city, which is imperishable, and which contains all the truly good men who have ever lived.

These are the leading propositions of what we may call in a lax and general way the Augustinian philosophy of history, which was substantially the only one known in medieval Europe, and which has reappeared in modern times in many forms and with more or less important modifications. There are still those who accept it as the only philosophy of history possible or desirable; but the vast majority of thoughtful minds are now probably in greater danger of overlooking than of over-estimating its worth in any other than a religious reference. Its defects are numerous and obvious. It subordinates all things to the Church in a false and misleading way, depreciates and degrades secular life, takes no account at all of many an important people, and of the very greatest of those which it condescends to notice gives most superficial and partial views. Its assertion of the existence, power, and wisdom of the First Providential Cause, however admirable it may be in itself, is unsupported by adequate proof, that being only attainable by the investigation of secondary causes, which are neglected. It virtually identifies the history of a special people, the Jewish, as recorded for a special purpose in the canonical books of Scripture, with the history of humanity, so far as recoverable from any kind of genuine monument or memorial by any kind of sound research. It ignores, or fails worthily to appreciate, art, literature, science, philosophy, natural and ethnic religion, law, politics, and, in a word, almost every phase of ordinary human life and culture. Instead of attempting truly and impartially to explain history, it seeks to convert it into an illustration and verification of a theological system. It so emphasises the distinction between elect and non-elect as virtually to deny the unity of humanity. It represents the kingdom of the devil as not less enduring and more populous than that of God, so that the ultimate goal of history is for the majority of human souls one of eternal sin and suffering.

With all its defects, however, it was a vast improvement on previous theories of history, or rather on the previous want of a theory. It explicitly affirmed the historical unity and pro-

gress which to some extent it implicitly denied. It recognised the importance of the moral and spiritual in the life and movement of humanity. It represented history as one great whole guided by principles and proceeding to solemn issues through an orderly series of stages. It made apparent that the knowledge of history bears closely on the highest problems of speculation. The ultimate and greatest triumph of historical philosophy may not unreasonably be expected to be the full proof of Providence, the discovery by the processes of scientific method of the divine plan which unites and harmonises the apparent chaos of human actions contained in history into a cosmos. The historical theory of Augustine was the first sustained and comprehensive attempt to trace such a plan, and although far from scientific in its character, it well deserves, in the main, the admiration which it has received.

IV. The first writer to treat history as the proper object of a special science was Mohammed Ibn Khaldun. Whether on this account he is to be regarded or not as the founder of the science of history is a question as to which there may well be difference of opinion; but no candid reader of his 'Prolegomena' (*Mocaddemat*) can fail to admit that his claim to the honour is more valid than that of any other author previous to Vico.

Our knowledge of his life is drawn chiefly from an autobiography which stops short at the year 1394 (A.H. 797), twelve years before his death. It seems obviously accurate and honest, and is sufficiently full and detailed, yet reveals little of the writer's inner self, and portrays but indistinctly his outer life and its surroundings. It has no remarkable merits.

Ibn Khaldun was born at Tunis in 1332. He descended from an ancient Arab tribe of Hadramaut, and from a family which for some centuries exercised great influence in Spain. On the fall of the Ommayades his ancestors settled in North Africa. He received a careful education, showed great aptitude for learning, and was at an early age licensed to teach a variety of subjects. Among his acquirements were knowledge of the Koran, of ancient Arabic poetry, of the religious traditions, and of

grammar, logic, mathematics, jurisprudence, dogmatic theology, and philosophy. It did not fall to his lot in life to have much learned leisure, but his thirst for knowledge and his love of literature remained always keen and strong. At the age of twenty he began his political career by entering the service of the Sultan of Tunis, Ibn Ishac II.; two years later he passed into that of the Sultan of Fez, Abu Eïnan. The favour at first shown him by the latter sovereign gave rise to jealousy and intrigues which led to his disgrace and imprisonment. In 1359, on the death of Abu Eïnan, he was released by Abu Salem and appointed secretary of state. He was still, however, the object of envy and calumny, and after the death of Abu Salem, his intercourse with the powerful Vizir Omar became so unpleasant that he left the Court, and soon after passed into Spain, where he was received with great favour by Ibn El-Ahmer, to whom he had rendered important services in Africa. In the following year he was at Seville as the ambassador of El-Ahmer to Peter the Cruel, King of Castile, by whom he was graciously treated.

He returned to Africa in 1365 as prime minister of a former friend, Ibn Abdallah, who had made himself master of Begeyi. After this prince was slain in a battle against Abdul-Abbas, Sultan of Constantine, Khaldun led for some years a very unsettled and unsafe life, amidst warring kings, and dependent on the friendship of the chiefs of certain powerful and independent tribes. From 1370 to 1374 he was in the service of the sovereign of Morocco, and especially engaged in negotiations and expeditions with the Arab tribes. In the latter year he passed a second time into Spain, but was soon forced to return. Thereupon he withdrew from public life for four years, and applied himself exclusively to study in a large solitary castle, of which the ruins are said still to be remaining, on an affluent of the Mina, in the province of Oran. In this retreat he composed his 'Prolegomena,' and began his 'History of the Arabs and Berbers.' To continue the latter he required to have access to large libraries, and this was one of the reasons which induced him in 1378 to revisit Tunis.

He was received with distinction by the Sultan Abdul-Abbas and the general body of the citizens, and with enthusiasm by

the students, who constrained him to give them instruction; but also with suspicion and aversion by a formidable party of courtiers, headed by the chief mufti, Ibn Arfa. The machinations of his enemies caused him, after he had composed his 'History of the Berbers,' to resolve on making the pilgrimage to Mecca. Having obtained permission to depart, he sailed in October 1382 for Egypt, landed in November at Alexandria, and after a month's stay there, proceeded to Cairo. His fame had preceded him, and as no caravans left for Mecca that year, he yielded to the persuasions of the Sultan Barkuk to accept a professorship and postpone his pilgrimage. He was afterwards raised to the chief Malekite cadiship. In this office his rigid justice and his zeal against abuses made him many enemies among the official class. At the same time a terrible calamity befell him. The vessel bearing his family from Morocco to Egypt was wrecked, and by one stroke he lost, as he says, his wealth, his children, and his happiness. He was overwhelmed with affliction, and could only find consolation in prayer. In 1387 he made the journey to Mecca, and thence returned to Cairo. For a time he gave himself up entirely to study and teaching. His autobiography was composed in, and ends with, 1394. In 1400 he followed Ferruj, Sultan of Egypt, in his expedition into Syria against the famous Timur (Tamerlane), and was among those who were besieged in Damascus. On his surrender of himself to the conqueror he was treated with great respect and generosity. Timur showed the utmost appreciation of Khaldun's gifts and knowledge, and Khaldun showed himself a courtier of consummate skill. The Tartar monarch would fain have taken the historian to Turkistan, but the seductive tongue of the Arab politician dissuaded him from carrying the desire into effect. Khaldun returned to Cairo, and re-entered public life as chief cadi. He died in 1406, at the age of seventy-four.

Even from the foregoing brief summary of the chief incidents in his career, it will be apparent that Ibn Khaldun must have been an altogether remarkable man. Living amidst circumstances the most complicated, combinations shifting from day to day, plots and intrigues, despotic arbitrariness and mean jealousies, he played an active and prominent part in many

situations. Although often cast down, he as often rose speedily up again; and he remained from youth to age, through all the vicissitudes of a difficult and eventful career, distinguished and influential, courted or persecuted, dreaded or admired. He was a skilful politician, an accomplished courtier, a brilliant member of society, a man subtle in counsel, persuasive in speech, pliant in adapting himself to circumstances, qualified for the most diverse offices, a proficient in almost every liberal art and every department of science cultivated by his Mohammedan contemporaries. He was, perhaps, not wholly devoid of the spirit of intrigue, somewhat too conscious of his own superiority, and inclined to exercise power with rather high a hand. Obviously he was ambitious of eminence and fame both in politics and literature; but he cannot be charged with disregard of moral principles or indulgence in vicious habits. He was a devout and strict Mussulman.

He adhered to no metaphysical or speculative system of philosophy. Previous to the fourteenth century, philosophy, in all Mohammedan lands, had fallen into utter disrepute; theological orthodoxy had, wherever the Koran was acknowledged as the supreme religious authority, completely crushed out of existence independent thought on fundamental problems. In this reference Ibn Khaldun did not rise above the spirit of his age. In all questions relating to the supra-sensuous world he placed little faith in reason and full confidence in revelation. He has devoted a chapter of his 'Prolegomena' to prove that philosophy is science falsely so called, and not only incapable of fulfilling its promises, but, as hostile to religion, naturally hurtful. He grants merely that a knowledge of its history is of some value, and that the study of it helps to sharpen the logical understanding. He affirms, however, that it should not be cultivated except by those who have been well grounded in Koranic exegesis and Islamic jurisprudence. He highly esteemed the positive sciences, and he accepted the teaching of Mohammed and the dogmatic theology based on it as deserving of implicit trust, but he regarded the free exercise of reason in the spheres of religion and metaphysics as delusive and pernicious. Believing in no philosophy, he was, of course, under no temptation to attempt the explanation of history by

philosophy. The Koran contained few germs of historical doctrine. Hence Khaldun could only form historical theories by drawing them directly from historical facts. His knowledge of historical facts, at least so far as attainable from oriental sources, was, however, vast and profound, practical and living,—the product both of learned research and personal experience. He had, further, a rare power of seeing into the nature and significance of social phenomena, and a remarkable facility in detecting their conditions and tracing their connections. He was an excellent generaliser. It is entirely to these qualities that we must ascribe his success as an historical thinker,—not at all to his speculative capacity or the excellence of his philosophical principles.

Ibn Khaldun wrote on various subjects. His minor treatises had a temporary popularity, but have been long forgotten. His fame rests securely, however, on his *magnum opus*, the 'Universal History,' and especially on the first part of it, the 'Prolegomena.' The second part comprises the history of the Arabs, Nabatæans, Syrians, Persians, Israelites, Copts, Greeks, Romans, Turks, and Franks. The third or last part is occupied with the Berbers and neighbouring peoples. On these two latter parts—the strictly historical divisions of the work—only a very few specialists can be entitled to pronounce a judgment. Their author's own estimate of their originality, conformity to the requirements of science and criticism, and value, was very high. There can be little doubt that it was too high. The most competent modern critics who have occupied themselves with Ibn Khaldun's 'Universal History'—Dozy, De Slane, and Amari—agree in recognising that as an historical work it has certain serious defects. They find the style often obscure and careless; the narrative at times diffuse and impeded in its motion by superfluous reasonings; the distribution of the matter or contents such as leads to frequent repetitions; and the testimony of the original authorities relied on not always correctly reported. All this may very probably be true. Had Ibn Khaldun written what would in the present day be deemed a truly scientific history, he would have performed a far more extraordinary feat than that which he accomplished as an historical theorist. It is scarcely con-

ceivable, indeed, that such a history could be written in a Semitic language.

The 'Prolegomena' must now receive our exclusive attention. They may fairly be regarded as forming a distinct and complete work. Of this work I proceed to give a brief account.[1]

It consists of a preface, an introduction, and six sections or divisions.

In the preface the general subject of the work is said to be "history, a species of knowledge universally esteemed, largely cultivated, and manifoldly useful." History is described as being in external form the display or delineation of the events which occur throughout the course of ages in the experience of peoples and dynasties, and in its internal characteristics the examination and verification of facts, the attentive investigation of their causes, and a profound and comprehensive insight into the way in which social phenomena have been produced. When it corresponds to this its true nature, history "deserves to be counted among the sciences." The aim of Ibn Khaldun's work is to raise history to the rank of a science. This aim, he considered, no previous writer had made a deliberate and sustained endeavour to accomplish.

The introduction dwells chiefly on the uncriticalness of historians and its causes. Various instances are given of their credulity in the acceptance of testimony, and of the fallaciousness and insufficiency of their attempted explanations of the events which they describe. Masudi's account, drawn from the Pentateuch, of the number of armed Israelites under Moses in the wilderness, is among those subjected to criticism in this connection, and the grounds on which it is pronounced incredible are nearly the same as those with which Colenso has made us in the present day so familiar. As causes of historians erring as they have done, there are mentioned the overlooking of the differences of times and epochs, the judging too hastily from analogies and resemblances, opinionativeness, excessive trust in one's self or in others, servility, and a want of know-

[1] Prolegomènes d'Ebn-Khaldoun, texte Arabe publié par M. Quatremère, in Notices et Extr. des MSS., t. xvi.-xviii. Paris, 1858.—Traduction par M. De Slane, in Not. et Extr., t. xix.-xxi. Paris, 1862.

ledge of the nature and influence of civilisation. The consideration of the last of these causes leads Ibn Khaldun to represent the inquiry which he purposes to institute, and the results which he hopes thereby to attain, as a science of civilisation which will supply a criterion of truth and error in history. It will form, he says, "a new science as remarkable for its originality as for its extent and utility." It will be at once the richest result and the surest guide of history.

The First Section of the 'Prolegomena' treats of society in general, and of the varieties of the human race, and of the regions of the earth which they inhabit, as related thereto. It starts from the position that man is by nature a social being. His body and mind, wants and affections, for their exercise, satisfaction, and development, all imply and demand co-operation and communion with his fellows,—participation in a collective and common life. This collective or common life passes through stages of what is called culture or civilisation; and just as quantity is the object of geometry, the heavenly bodies of astronomy, and the human frame of medical science, so is civilisation or culture the object of the new science, the Science of History.

There follows a lengthened description of the physical basis and conditions of history and civilisation. The chief features of the inhabited portion of the earth, its regions, principal seas, great rivers, climates, &c., are made the subjects of exposition. The seven climatic zones, and the ten sections of each, are delineated, and their inhabitants specified. The three climatic zones of moderate temperature are described in detail, and the distinctive features of the social condition and civilisation of their inhabitants dwelt upon. The influence of the atmosphere, heat, &c., on the physical and even mental and moral peculiarities of peoples is maintained to be great. Not only the darkness of skin of the negroes, but their characteristics of disposition and of mode of life, are traced to the influence of climate. A careful attempt is also made to show how differences of fertility of soil—how dearth and abundance—modify the bodily constitution and affect the minds of men, and so operate on society. His estimate of the advantageousness of abstemiousness and simplicity as regards food will perhaps appear to most persons

too high. It has to be kept in mind that his ideal of healthy physical life for man was one drawn from the actual life of the Arabs of the desert.

The section closes with a chapter on prophetism,—on the apprehension of the things of the invisible world vouchsafed to certain specially favoured persons for the instruction of ordinary mankind. The chapter is full of interesting and instructive matter, but will not improbably seem to occidental readers very irrelevantly placed. It must not be forgotten, however, that to the Semitic mind prophetism generally presents itself as the chief or even sole source of religious knowledge and authority, and therefore as a subject the discussion of which cannot be evaded if religion is to be maintained to be one of the conditions of civilisation.

The Second Section of the 'Prolegomena' treats of the civilisation of nomadic and half-savage peoples.

In it Ibn Khaldun appears at his best, writing, as he does, from direct and full knowledge. He begins by indicating how the different usages and institutions of peoples depend to a large extent on the ways in which they provide for their subsistence. He describes how peoples have at first contented themselves with simple necessities, and then gradually risen to refinement and luxury through a series of states or stages all of which are alike conformed to nature, in the sense of being adapted to its circumstances or environment. He shows how the condition of the Arab race is thus natural.

He traces the connections between life in the country and life in towns. The former precedes the latter. It is the cradle of civilisation. It originates towns, supports them, and supplies them with population. He insists on the moral superiority, notwithstanding their greater rudeness of manners, of the inhabitants of the country to those of cities. They are, in particular, more courageous. This is largely to be ascribed to their greater independence of action,—their exemption from an external authoritative regulation of human conduct which deprives men of self-reliance and energy.

The conditions of social life in the desert are dwelt upon at length. The desert tribe requires to be, above all, animated with the feeling of the community. Such feeling is only to be

found in sufficient strength among persons connected by blood-relationship or an equivalent tie; and purity of blood is only to be found in the desert and among half-savage tribes. In such tribes the right of government must be in one family, and that the most powerful of the tribe. It would be ruinous to allow it to pass to an alien. Only among families united and animated by a strong common feeling so as to form a powerful and distinguished confraternity is nobility a reality. The so-called nobility of other families is a mere semblance of nobility, a something metaphorical or conventional. Among the inhabitants of towns there are no families noble in the primary and proper sense, although there are virtuous, influential, and respected families. A family is not noble because descended from noble ancestors, but because possessed of the spirit of nobility. The Jews are descended from the noblest family on earth, and may boast of glorious ancestors, but there is now no family nobility among the Jews. The nobility of a family seldom lasts longer than four generations. Scarcely any family has retained nobility throughout six generations. The only men truly capable of ruling are those who seek to distinguish themselves by noble qualities and achievements.

Our author next proceeds to argue that semi-barbarous nomadic tribes are the best fitted for making extensive conquests, provided that tribal feeling be strong in them; that they are moved by a common spirit and motive; and that they have not been corrupted by sensuous indulgence or debased by servitude. He naturally finds the chief proof of this thesis in the rapid spread of Arab domination under Mohammed and his successors. At the same time, he points out that the Arabs have only succeeded in establishing their sway over the inhabitants of the plains, but have failed to subdue the Berbers and other mountaineers.

He shows himself clearly aware of the defects and faults of the Arabs. This strikingly appears in the remarkable chapter in which he maintains that the Arabs have rapidly ruined every country which they have conquered. It may be of interest, perhaps, and serve to give some conception of his mode of thought and style of expression, if I translate a considerable portion of this chapter.

"The habits and practices of nomadic life have made the Arabs a rude and savage people. Their roughness of manners has become to them a second nature, and one in which they find satisfaction, seeing that it ensures them freedom and independence. Such a disposition is an obstacle to the progress of civilisation. To move from place to place, to traverse the desert, has been from the remotest times their chief occupation. The nomadic life, however, is as contrary to the progress of civilisation as the sedentary life is favourable to it. Let the Arabs require stones to place under their cooking-vessels, and they will not hesitate to spoil a house in order to procure them; let them want wood for the stakes or poles of their tents, and in order to get it they will strip from an edifice its roof. Their very mode of life renders them hostile to anything like building, yet to build is a first step in civilisation. Further, they are, from natural disposition, always ready to seize property by violence, to seek wealth with armed hand, to rob without moderation or restriction. Whenever they cast their eyes on a fine flock, or an article of furniture, or a useful instrument, they carry it off by force if they can. When, having conquered a province or founded a dynasty, they are in a condition to satisfy their rapacity, they treat with contempt all laws designed to protect property and wealth. Under their rule everything goes to ruin. They impose on tradesmen and artisans intolerable burdens, without thought of conferring on them any compensating advantages. And yet the exercise of arts and trades is the real source of wealth. If the handicrafts are fettered and burdened, they cease to be profitable; the hope of gain is extinguished, and labour is abandoned; then social order is deranged, and civilisation recedes. Further, the Arabs neglect all the functions of government; they are not anxious to prevent crime or watchful in preserving the public safety. Their sole care is to draw money from their subjects, either by exaction or violence; if they can succeed in attaining this end they have no other anxiety. They spend not a thought on putting order into the administration of the State, in providing for the welfare of their subjects, and in restraining malefactors. In accordance with a custom which has always existed among them, they substitute fines for bodily punishments, in order thereby to increase their income. But mere fines are not sufficient to repress crime and deter malefactors; on the contrary, they encourage wicked-minded men, who care little for pecuniary forfeits, if they can accomplish their nefarious projects. The subjects of an Arab tribe, in fact, are left almost without government,—a condition of things alike destructive to the population and prosperity of a country. . . . Look at all lands which the Arabs have conquered from the remotest times. Civilisation and population have disappeared from them, and their very soil seems to have changed its nature. In Yemen all the centres of population are deserted, with the exception of a few large

towns; in Irac it is the same, and the richly cultivated fields which adorned it, when under Persian rule, have become waste. Syria is now ruined; and the countries of North Africa are all still suffering from the devastations of the Arabs."

In the next chapter, the Arabs are depicted as the most insubordinate, jealous, and contentious of peoples; and as, consequently, the one in which there is least cohesiveness, and least natural capacity for the founding of a solid and extensive empire. But they are also described in it as characterised by a simplicity of life, an energy of will, a spirit of clanship, and a reverence for divine authority, which make them of all peoples the one most likely to accept the doctrine and follow the guidance of a prophet or saint of their own race, with readiness and enthusiasm. It is only when animated by religious zeal that the Arabs have shown themselves powerful to pull down and set up empires. But we are told in the chapter which follows the one just referred to, that in no circumstances have they shown themselves capable of permanently maintaining them. Even when they have succeeded in founding an empire, their native pride and insubordinateness soon reassert themselves, while their religious fervour decreases, or becomes extinct. The result is, that allegiance to the central authority is thrown off by chief after chief, tribe after tribe, and that the original semi-savage state of the race returns.

The Third Section of Ibn Khaldun's 'Prolegomena' treats of the rise, the government, and the fall of empires. It is a long section, and a considerable portion of it directly concerns, not historical, but political science. This portion, occupying the middle of the section, may be regarded as a treatise on the constitution and administration, the functions and methods, and the offices and departments, of a Mohammedan government. As such, it is full of instruction and interest; but it does not properly concern us here. I shall, therefore, merely indicate the general tenor of what is said in this third section as to how empires are established and destroyed,—how dynasties acquire and lose power.

The force which public spirit imparts is represented as the prime condition of acquiring dominion. When the individuals

of a tribe, or army, or people, are so united and animated by common feeling and aim as readily and rejoicingly to meet all dangers and make all sacrifices, their leaders can easily found an empire. They must not trust, however, exclusively to the sympathy and enthusiasm of their followers, and must even be careful to keep in due restraint and obedience those through whose zeal and devotedness they rise to sovereignty. Only through establishing a good administration, preserving order and justice, enacting wise laws, maintaining a regular army, and attracting to themselves and their families the affections of their subjects, can they build up a dynasty which will endure. It is again earnestly argued that as the power of a religion, revealed through a prophet, can alone cause jealousies, dissensions, and rivalries in a State to give place to unity, mutual aid, and generous zeal, there can be no other basis of authority over a great empire. But religious enthusiasm is admitted to be insufficient unless it pervades a large and strong party. God never gives a commission of reformation except to those who are able to carry it into execution. Those who are not widely believed are not His prophets. General assent and practical success are evidences of divine truth. These positions are all attempted to be illustrated and confirmed by historical facts related in oriental records.

A considerable number of chapters treat of the duration of empires. It is indicated how they may fall through being too large, and that there are insuperable obstacles to the establishment of a universal empire. It is argued that the Arab conquests were made too rapidly to be lasting, and that Arab kingdoms had been dismembered and overthrown, owing, in a considerable measure, to their extent. The magnitude and duration of empires founded on conquest must, it is held, be in proportion to the number and force of those through whom the conquest is effected. The course of conquest must be slow in countries inhabited by numerous tribes. Irac and Syria were easily and completely subdued; Morocco only with difficulty and in part. The tendencies of sovereignties to despotism and to luxury, and, through these, to corruption and ruin, are well described. For generalisation on this subject oriental history supplied data in abundance.

Ibn Khaldun does not forget to search for a law of the course of empires. The guiding principle of his inquiry is analogy. An empire, he holds, has a life of its own like an individual. As a rule, its life does not last longer than that of three generations of men—three times the mean life of a man; in a word, not longer than one hundred and twenty years. This alleged law or fact is thus explained: In each empire, the first generation of its people possesses in full vigour the tribal spirit, the hardy and warlike character of nomads; the second generation, under the influence of power and wealth, generally acquires the self-indulgent and dependent habits of sedentary life, and loses force and courage; and in the third generation the distinctive qualities of the desert man disappear, and the dynasty becomes incapable of resisting the attacks of a formidable enemy. The generalisation and the explanation, it will be observed, are alike drawn from the data most accessible and patent to an oriental. They are clearly inapplicable to the peoples and dynasties of Europe.

In the section of the work at present under consideration, Ibn Khaldun also exhibits history as a process of continuous movement and change with remarkable clearness. Each empire, he maintains, passes through several phases and becomes subject to divers general modifications, which affect all the elements of society and influence the sentiments and modes of thought and action of all the members of a generation. The general character of a people, he shows himself fully aware, always corresponds to its epoch, position, and relationships in history. In this respect his superiority to the Christian medieval chroniclers is most conspicuous. They, almost without exception, were manifestly, as G. Monod has observed, "unconscious of the successive modifications which time brings with it." Ibn Khaldun was not so. He expresses repeatedly and in various forms the general truth that history is a continuous collective movement, an incessant and inevitable development. He also shows the thoroughness of his realisation of it by the delineations which he gives, from time to time, of the ways in which one stage of civilisation generally passes into another. These sketches remind us much more of the pages of a class of historico-philosophical writers of the eighteenth cen-

tury than of any to be found in the medieval historians of Europe.

Let us pass to the Fourth Section of our author's works,—a section which need not detain us long. It relates to towns, the sedentary mode of life, a settled and concentrated civilisation.

At the outset, the relation of the foundation and dissolution of towns to the rise and fall of kingdoms is discussed. Kingdoms, it is argued, are the first established, and these originate towns, but towns may either perish with the kingdoms to which they belong or survive them. The causes which lead the peoples that establish kingdoms to found towns are exhibited, and the circumstances to be taken into account in the choice of towns are indicated. Much curious lore is here accumulated regarding famous towns, mosques, temples, and large constructions.

In this section also, Ibn Khaldun shows that he at least did not overestimate the genius and achievements of his own people. Their edifices he pronounces unworthy of a race which had possessed such power and wealth, and greatly inferior to those of the nations which had preceded them. He holds that the Arabs are lacking in talent for architecture and the arts. They are, he affirms, by native character averse to magnificent building, and indifferent to elegance. Their constructions are generally without solidity. He recognises, however, the high perfection to which the arts had attained among the Moslems in Spain, and attributes it to the fact that Mohammedan civilisation had there continued unbroken and uninterrupted throughout the duration of an exceptional number of dynasties.

In subsequent chapters the effects of towns on the districts which surround them, the connection between their fortunes and those of particular dynasties, their relations to population, wealth, and morality, their influences on culture and the arts, the social and political changes which take place within them, and the causes of their decay and ruin, are attempted to be traced.

The Fifth Section of the 'Historical Prolegomena' treats of the means of procuring national subsistence and of promoting national prosperity, and of the various arts subservient thereto, industrial, economic, medical, recreative, and the like. The Sixth Section treats of the sciences in an almost encyclopædic

manner. These, the last two sections of the work, are not less instructive and interesting than those which precede them. It would take us, however, altogether out of our way to analyse or summarise them. Yet it has to be observed that, in the view of their author, they were by no means irrelevant to the main theme of his book, and could not have been consistently omitted. His subject was the science of history; and the science of history he identified with the science of civilisation,—a vast and imperial science, in which all particular arts and sciences may be included, or to which they are, at least, all subordinate.

A criticism of the work of Ibn Khaldun is unnecessary. The chief source of such defects and errors as it contains was its author's very imperfect acquaintance with the history and civilisation of Europe. Had he known the classical and Christian worlds as well as he knew the Mohammedan world, and generalised and reasoned on them also with the same independence and insight, the treatise which he might have produced would have been one of the greatest and most valuable in literature. The one which he has left is, however, sufficiently great and valuable to preserve his name and fame to latest generations.

THE

PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY IN FRANCE

CHAPTER I.

THE PROGRESS OF HISTORIOGRAPHY, AND THE BEGINNINGS OF HISTORICAL PHILOSOPHY IN FRANCE: BODIN.

I.

ONLY when French nationality, civilisation, and literature had reached a certain stage of development could reflection on history make its appearance in France. And when it did appear, the form in which it presented itself and the course which it followed were largely determined by the historical processes which it presupposed. What these were need not be here described. How French nationality was founded—how French civilisation gradually acquired the character which it exhibited in the sixteenth century—from what beginnings and through what stages French literature grew onwards to the same time—must be learned from such histories of France as those of Michelet and Martin, such histories of French civilisation as those of Guizot and Rambaud, and such histories of French literature as those of Ampère, Villemain, Nisard, and Demogeot. All that can here be attempted is very briefly to indicate the course of historical literature in France from its origin to the dawn of French historical speculation.[1]

[1] The documents which relate to the early history of France are presented in the following collections: 1. Recueil des Historiens des Gaules et de la France. (Commencé par les Bénédictins de la congrégation de Saint-Maur, et continué par l'Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres.) 22 vols., 1737-1865.—2. Collection des Mémoires relatifs à l'histoire de France, depuis la fondation de la monarchie française jusqu'au xiiie siècle. Avec une introduction, des supplémens, des notices et des notes, par M. F. Guizot. 31 vols., 1824-1835.—3. Collection des Chroniques Nationales Françaises écrites en langue vulgaire, du xiiie au xvie siècle. Avec notes et éclaircissements par J. A. Bouchon. 47 vols., 1824-1829.—4. Collec-

Until somewhat far on in the middle ages the composition of history in France, as elsewhere, was almost exclusively in the hands of priests and monks. This accounts for many of the defects and faults of medieval histories; but is also a fact which manifestly requires to be itself accounted for. The explanation of it can only be found in the ignorance of the laity and the predominance of ecclesiastical views and interests in those ages. The clergy almost alone wrote history, because very few others could write it or wished to write it, and because the history of the time was very largely Church history. The secular history of the early middle ages, crowded as it was with picturesque and tragic incidents, with events fateful for the whole future of the world, and with the most striking displays of human character, force, and passion, has strong attractions for the educated man of the present day, but it was too tumultuous and chaotic, too dark and woful, for the most reflective and best informed contemporaries to take pleasure in contemplating and describing it for its own sake. The Church of Christ struggling like a ship amidst the waves of a stormy sea, the monastery shining like a lamp through surrounding darkness, lives conspicuously devoted to the service of God, these alone carried a perceptible significance in them even to the few who possessed such scanty culture

tion complète des Mémoires relatifs à l'histoire de France, depuis le règne de Philippe-Auguste, jusqu'à la Paix de Paris conclue en 1763. Avec des notices sur chaque auteur et des observations sur chaque ouvrage, par M. Petitot et M. Monmerqué. 131 vols., 1819-1829.—5. Nouvelle Collection des Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de France depuis le xiiie siècle jusqu'à la fin du xviiie. Précédés de notices pour caractériser chaque auteur des mémoires et son époque ; suivis de l'analyse des documents historiques qui s'y rapportent. Par MM. Michaud et Poujoulat. 32 vols., 1836-1839.—6. Société de l'Histoire de France. 130 vols., 1833-1875. There are also two important collections which may be regarded as complementary and supplementary to those mentioned, viz.: 1. C. Leber, Collection des meilleurs Dissertations, Notices et Traités Particuliers relatifs à l'histoire de France, composée en grande partie de pièces rares, ou qui n'ont jamais été publiées séparément, pour servir à compléter toutes les collections de mémoires sur cette matière. 20 vols., 1838.—2. Bibliothèque de l'École de Chartes, revue d'érudition, consacrée spécialement à l'étude du moyen âge: 1839-1888. Indispensable as a guide to the contents of these collections and to the original authorities on the history of France is the bibliographical work of M. Alfred Franklin, Les Sources de l'Histoire de France, 1877. Also valuable is G. Monod, Bibliographie de l'Histoire de France, catalogue méthodique et chronologique des sources et des ouvrages relatifs à l'histoire de France depuis les origines jusqu'en 1789: 1888.

as was then attainable. Secular society required to develop a culture of its own, and to make for itself an intelligible history of its own, before it could obtain historians of its own.

The monasteries were the appropriate cradles of medieval historiography. They could not dispense with written memorials, and they afforded leisure and means of knowledge. It was almost a necessity, and it soon became the rule, for each monastery to have a scribe or recorder to commemorate whatever happened affecting the interests and obligations of the monastic community; and with these events there gradually came to be associated others of greater moment and wider influence. These records were added to, interpolated, corrected, and even recast, until they satisfied the heads of the institutions. Thus grew up the monastic chronicles. In close connection with them appeared another and more popular sort of ecclesiastical chronicles, namely, the biographies of distinguished churchmen and lives of the saints. These naturally led to the biographies of great laymen—of men who were recognised to have done things worthy of being recorded even by the hands of ecclesiastics, although they were never likely to be ecclesiastically canonised. Einhard's Life of Charlemagne is one of the earliest and best of these biographies.

The famous abbey of St Denis—at the instigation, it is thought, of Abbot Suger, one of the most remarkable men in French medieval history [1]—took the important step of making a collection of the best and most esteemed chronicles. To it new ones were added as they were composed. Thus the deeds of the kings of France were preserved in the archives of the same sacred building in the vaults of which their bodies reposed. And thus were formed what were called "the Great Chronicles of France," which came down to the reign of Louis XI. Long before the collection was completed, translations of these Latin chron-

[1] Suger (1082-1152) himself wrote a Vita Ludovici Grossi Regis which will be found in the Œuvres Complètes de Suger, recueillies, annotées et publiées d'après les manuscrits, par A. Legoy de la Marche, 1867. The best biographies of him are those of F. Combes, L'Abbé Suger, Histoire de son ministère et de sa régence, 1853; and of A. Vëtauld, Vie de Suger, Tours, 1871. Also may be mentioned A. Huguenin, Étude sur l'Abbé Suger, 1855; the sketch in M. Louis de Carne's Fondateurs de l'unité française, 2 vols., 1856; and Baudrillart's Histoire du Luxe, tom. iii. ch. 5: Suger et son rôle dans le luxe.

icles into the vernacular began to be made for the laity. As was to be expected, the earliest translated was the most fabulous of all, that of the pseudo-Turpin concerning Charlemagne—a work which is the French counterpart of our Geoffrey of Monmouth's History, and the chief source of the romantic materials so skilfully employed by writers like Boccaccio and Ariosto. What are now called the Chronicles of France, or the Chronicles of St Denis, are not the Latin originals collected or composed by the monks of St Denis, but the French translations of these works, executed by the monks of St Denis or under their supervision.[1]

While the monks of St Denis—much to their credit—were composing chronicles in Latin or translating them into French, lay chroniclers began to appear who wrote of secular things in a secular spirit, and in the vernacular speech. The earliest was Villehardouin, and he was followed by Joinville, Froissart, Monstrelet, and Commines, with whom the series closed. Villehardouin died in 1213 and Commines in 1509, so that about three hundred years separated them. During the whole period England had no lay vernacular histories; and even Italy had none before the fourteenth century. The vernacular chronicle—variously called Saxon, Anglo-Saxon, and English—of which Britain is justly proud, and that of Nestor, the father of Russian historiography, long preceded, indeed, the French works referred to, but they also essentially differed from them in character. Aimé's History of Norman warfare in Southern Italy[2] is likewise earlier, but it can only be regarded as belonging to the same series if looked at merely from the linguistic point of view. It was in France that secular society first found truly representative historians. Yet not secular society as a whole; not the *bourgeoisie*, and

[1] On the Chronicles of France, both in the older and later use of the term, see the prefaces of M. P. Paris to his edition of Les Grandes Chroniques de France, 6 vols., 1836-1838, and M. de la Curne's Mémoire sur les Principaux Monuments de France in the Académie des Inscriptions, tom. xxii.

[2] L'Istoire de li Normant et la Chronique de Robert Viscart, par Aimé, moine du Mont-Cassin. Publiées pour la première fois, d'après un manuscrit françois inédit du xiiie siècle, appartenant à la Bibliothèque royale, par Champollion-Figeac, 1835. As to the authorship of the second work, see R. Wilmans, Ist Amatus von Monte Cassino der Verfasser der Chronica Roberti Biscardi? in Pertz, Archiv. (1849), x.

still less the common people. Italy produced the earliest historians of civic communities. Historians just and sympathetic towards the humblest classes have only appeared in recent times. The early French vernacular chroniclers spoken of were, with the exception of Froissart, noblemen; and Froissart, although of plebeian birth and clerical training, was a thorough courtier. They all, therefore, occupied themselves only with the things for which noblemen in those days cared. Their works expressed and reflected the spirit and features of feudalism and chivalry.

The direct originating impulse to these works came from the Crusades. Before the thirteenth century France had acquired a large fund of life and force which she displayed in poetry, in art, in scholastic speculation, and in political activity. She had become a separate, centralised, and organised power, capable of so strongly influencing surrounding peoples that the direction of the Crusades fell chiefly into her hands. No other European country was so much influenced by the contact of the Eastern and Western peoples which then took place. Green, in his 'Short History of the English People,' does not devote a single paragraph to tracing the influence of the Crusades on England; and the omission, if a defect, is not a very serious one. A similar omission in a far shorter History of France would be a conspicuous proof of the ignorance and incompetence of its author. The Crusades affected the social and national development of England comparatively little, and for the most part indirectly; they influenced that of France powerfully and directly.

Geoffrey Villehardouin wrote, or more probably dictated, in the later years of his life, an account of the events which he witnessed, and in which he bore a distinguished part, during the fourth crusade. In a fresh and vivid but crude and unpolished narrative, he has told of the gathering of the crusaders, of the negotiations and alliance with the Venetians, of the differences of party and opinion in the expedition, of the capture of Zara, of the compact with Alexius and its issue, of the taking of Constantinople, and of the establishment of a Latin empire among the Greeks. The recital is artless and unadorned, but not without force, directness, and felicitous

lines and touches. Villehardouin, obviously a man of much practical ability, saw with clearness what came before him, and has left us in no doubt as to what it was that he saw; but his personal impressions suggested to him few general reflections, and of historical or other speculation there are no traces in his pages.[1]

Joinville was of a finer and richer nature than his predecessor and possessed of true literary genius. In his 'Histoire de St Louis,' written in 1309, the style is no longer, as in Villehardouin, rough and unpliant, but easy, flowing, and flexible, and capable of expressing reflections and feelings as well as merely conveying events; and the superiority as regards mastery over the materials, the co-ordination of the facts, the disposition of the narrative, is no less decided. He does not proceed simply narrating what he witnessed; he also judges and compares, meditates and moralises, finds expression for the varying moods of his own gay, generous, vivacious spirit, and gradually and skilfully produces an imperishable portraiture of the most conscientious and pious man who ever sat upon the throne of France, or, perhaps, of any nation.[2]

Villehardouin is little more than a chronicler; Joinville, as an excellent artist, is much more. But Froissart, who laboured for nearly forty years in the latter half of the fourteenth century on the brilliant work which has immortalised his name, daily (to use his own words) "rentrant dedans sa forge, pour ouvrer et forger en la haute et noble matière du temps passé," openly claims to be an historian as distinguished from a chronicler. "If I were merely to say such and such things happened at such times, without entering fully into the matter, which was

[1] The best editions of Villehardouin are those of M. Paulin Paris and M. Natalis de Wailly. For a general estimate of his character as a writer, see Daunou, Hist. litt. de France, 1852, xvii. 150-171, and Sainte-Beuve, Causeries du Lundi, ix. 305-330. Recently the trustworthiness of his narrative has been seriously assailed by Count Riant in t. xvii., xviii., and xxiii. of the Rev. d. quest. hist.; by L. Streit and J. Tessier in special brochures; and by E. Pears, The Fall of Constantinople, 1885. There is a sketch of his character taken from the new point of view by M. Ed. Sayons in vol. xxv., 1886, of the Cpte. Rend. d. Séan. et Trav. de l'Acad. d. Sc. Mor. et Pol.

[2] On Joinville see Vitet, Rev. d. Deux Mondes, lxxv., 132-163 (1868); N. de Wailly in Comptes Rendus d. Acad. Inscr. et Bel.-Let., 1865; and Champollion-Figeac, Mel. Hist., i. 615-645.

grandly horrible and disastrous, this would be a chronicle, but no history." The work of Froissart describes in detail the great enterprises and deeds of arms done not only in France, but in England, Scotland, and Ireland, Spain and Portugal, Germany and Italy, and even in Poland and Turkey and Africa, from 1326 to 1400, with a liveliness, garrulity, and natural grace, which recall Herodotus, and with a spiritedness of movement and a splendour and variety of incidents which remind us of Walter Scott. Never had been seen before historical painting on so broad a canvas, so crowded, and so richly coloured. All feudalism is there, and in all its magnificence. Yet Froissart, notwithstanding his inexhaustible curiosity, his vast memory, his keen interest in the things he described, his rare power of graphic portraiture, and his skill as a narrator, was not a historian in any strict or high sense. He lacked insight and seriousness; cared little to distinguish between reality and appearance, between the *vero* and the *ben trovato;* looked with indifference on oppression and cruelty; and sought as an author only to give pleasure and to gain fame.[1]

Monstrelet began his Chronicle with the year 1400,—*i.e.*, where that of Froissart had ended. He had none of the brilliant qualities of his predecessor. His prolixity makes him tiresome, notwithstanding the inherent interest of many of the events which he narrates. His general truthfulness is unquestionable, although he favoured the house of Burgundy to the extent of omitting or passing lightly over certain things which were not to its credit. His work contains much valuable historical information, but is not the production of an historical artist, and contains little historical reflection and no historical generalisations.

Leaving unnoticed Christina de Pisa and Alain Chartier, we pass to Philip de Commines, the chamberlain and councillor of Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, and afterwards the confident and adviser of the politic and unscrupulous Louis XI. The latter prince, who played the same part in France which his contemporaries Henry VII. and Ferdinand the Catholic did

[1] On Froissart see Sainte-Beuve, C. d. L., ix. 63-96; Curne in Mém. Acad. Inscr. et Bel.-Let., x., xiii., xiv. ; and K. de Lettenhove, Froissart, Étude littéraire sur le xive siècle, Bruxelles, 1857.

in England and Spain in destroying the power of the nobles and raising on its ruins the absolute rule of the monarch, is the hero of Commines' Memoirs. It is not the impetuous Charles but this astute Louis that the historian admires, not courage but policy, not brilliant feats of arms but successful intrigues. With him, as I have already had to remark, history first became political and reflective. Unlike the older chroniclers, he was not content to narrate merely in order to narrate and please, but sought even more to explain and instruct. He described incidents briefly, but was careful to indicate why things happened as they did, and what effects they produced. Hence his style was comparatively abstract, and he reasoned as well as recorded. From having been the first to endeavour of set purpose and with conspicuous success to detect and disclose the motive principles of historical personages and the causal connections of historical transactions, he has some right to the title, which has been so often given to him, of father of modern history. He made a distinct step beyond simple chronicling, and towards the mode of writing history in which his younger contemporaries, Guicciardini and Machiavelli, were the first greatly to excel. He was not, however, the intellectual equal of either of these celebrated Italians, and cannot properly be placed on the same level with either as an historian. He wrote only an historical memoir, whereas Guicciardini gave a complete account of one of the most complicated and agitated periods of Italian history. The practical shrewdness and judiciousness of his estimates of persons and actions deserve due appreciation, but they are not to be compared with the genius of a truly scientific kind displayed by Machiavelli in his treatment of Roman and Florentine history. His vision was clear and keen within the narrow range of personal experience, but he had neither conception nor feeling of the working of a general spirit, laws, and tendencies in human affairs. Hence the peculiarity by which Dr Arnold was much impressed, his perfect unconsciousness that the state of things which he described was on the point of passing away. In one respect he strikingly resembled Guicciardini and Machiavelli. In his eyes as in theirs, the political wisdom which it was the chief use of history to teach was to know how to attain political success. He was,

like his master the king, a Machiavellian before Machiavelli. Dr Arnold has said, "Philip de Comines praises his master Louis the Eleventh as one of the best of princes, although he witnessed not only the crimes of his life, but the miserable fears and suspicions of his latter end, and has even faithfully recorded them. In this respect Philip de Comines is in no respect superior to Froissart, with whom the crimes committed by his knights and great lords never interfere with his general eulogies of them."[1] Along with a correct statement of fact, these words contain a misleading *rapprochement* of names. The conscience of Froissart was perverted by prejudices inherent in the chivalry which he admired; that of Commines by an estimate of statesmanship which naturally gained acceptance in an age in which great and even beneficial social results appeared to have been attained by most immoral means. Commines was not, like Froissart, indifferent to the sufferings and the rights of the common people; he vigorously and feelingly condemned despotic government and arbitrary taxation. Nor was he insensible that the ruler who violates morality, although he may be approved at the bar of history, must be condemned at a higher tribunal. He distinguished between the politician and the man, and admitted that one might be wise as a politician yet foolish as a man. The masterly account which he gave of the last illness and death of King Louis goes far to compensate for the moral laxity which he had shown in the description of some of his actions. His not unfrequent references to God and Providence have been regarded as indications that he had formed a general and so far philosophical conception of history. In reality, they are of that *naïve* and simple kind which show that he had not. He made such references only when he felt experience and reason fail him in his attempts at historical interpretation.[2]

The Hundred Years' War between the French and the English on the Continent ended about the middle of the fifteenth cen-

[1] Lectures on Modern History, p. 119.

[2] On Commines may be consulted Sainte-Beuve, Caus. d. Lun., i. 241-257; Baron de Lettenhove, Lettres et Négoc. de Ph. de C., Brux. 1867; and W. Arnold, Die ethisch-politischen Grundanschauungen des Philipp von Comynes, Dresd. 1873. Villehardouin, Joinville, Froissart, Monstrelet, and Commines have all been translated into English.

tury with the English being driven out of France and the French being united into a large and powerful nation. So long as France was engaged in the struggle for existence on her own soil she was necessarily but little affected by the intellectual and spiritual movements which took place in other countries. When she came forth from her isolation, Europe was in process of rapid transformation. Geographical discovery, mechanical invention, new modes of thought and research, new conditions of existence, new convictions and aspirations, had begun to show the workings of a new life and were in course of forming a new world. Industry, commerce, war, the fine arts, literature, government, religion, science, and philosophy, were all influenced by the change. "Novus . . . rerum nascitur ordo."

The sixteenth century brought to France the Renaissance with its passionate study of the ancient classics and the Roman jurists, and the Reformation with its violent civil and religious strife and its agitation of the gravest social problems. The Renaissance spread from Italy; the Reformation from Germany and Switzerland; and in France their influences and results were inextricably blended. They profoundly affected the whole history of France in the sixteenth century, and, consequently, also the character of its historical literature.

Italy was the nation first quickened by the modern spirit, and France received it through contact with her. The early light of Italian culture, however, was speedily and disastrously eclipsed by the spread of priestly obscurantism. Hence already in the sixteenth century France had outstripped her instructress, and could boast of having in Budaeus, Turnebus, Lambinus, Stephanus, Scaliger, and Casaubon, the foremost scholars of their age. These men aimed not merely at mastering the languages of the ancient world, but at comprehending its entire contents. They were at once prodigies of philological and historical erudition and the founders of philological and historical criticism. Joseph Scaliger, in particular, rendered an immense service to historians by his 'De emendatione temporum' (1583)—the first scientific treatment of chronology.

The flourishing condition of jurisprudence in France during the sixteenth century must also be noted as having been highly favourable to historical study. The French jurists of that age

would appear to have been the most honourable and meritorious class in French society, if we may judge of them from those of their number whose lives have been recorded. They were not more remarkable for their learning and ability than for their independence of character and enlightened patriotism. They formed the chief barrier to the arbitrary power of the kings, and were often the best exponents of the genuine and legitimate aspirations of the nation. Men like L'Hôpital, the brothers Pithou, Hotman, Bodin, Pasquier, and De Thou, were drawn to historical research even less by their love of knowledge than by their zeal for the honour and welfare of their country and for the claims of justice and humanity.

The doctrines of the Reformation, and still more the conflicts to which they gave rise, exercised a great influence on the thought of France. They led to keen discussion of the principles on which government and society rest. They caused the competing claims of State and Church, of civil authority and individual conscience, and the comparative merits and demerits of different forms of religion and polity, to be debated with intense interest and from the most diverse points of view. They originated a multitude of pamphlets and memoirs, few of which were wholly lacking in living force, and some of which had considerable literary merit. Through them the opinions and passions of the various contending parties found direct and energetic expression. In the pamphlets the theories advocated were of the most varied and discordant kinds: all opinions, the most far-sighted and the most short-sighted, the most slavish and the most audacious, finding defenders. The memoir was the form in which history was chiefly written in France in the sixteenth century; and the memoirs of the *loyal serviteur*, the brothers Du Bellay, Gaspard and William de Tavannes, Margaret of Valois, Montluc, D'Aubigne, Brantôme, and others, give us living pictures of their authors and of the scenes through which they passed. They contain rich stores of material for the knowledge of an age of inexhaustible interest.

As regards general history Guicciardini and Machiavelli had set examples very difficult to imitate with success, but which were not without effect. Bernard Girard, Seigneur du Haillan, born at Bordeaux in 1537, was the first to attempt to write a

general history of France, and he took the Italian writers mentioned as his models in regard to style and method. That he fell far below them was due not to want of will but of ability. Concerning Fauchet, Du Tillet, Vignier, De Serres, and others, who attempted to write French history in the French language, it must suffice to refer to the interesting notices of them given by Augustin Thierry in his 'Dix Ans d'Études Historiques.'

The only really eminent French historian, if the term be taken in its strictest sense, belonging to the sixteenth century, was De Thou; and he unfortunately wrote in Latin. His nobility of character, his experience in practical affairs, his singular impartiality of judgment, his immense capacity of labour, his unswerving love of truth, rational freedom, and the public good, his vast knowledge of all kinds, and his natural and dignified eloquence, are everywhere displayed in his 'Historia sui temporis,' and amply account for the admiration with which it has been regarded. Its defects are those inseparable from the attempt to describe modern things in an ancient language: lack of pictorial power and of vision for proportion and perspective; and the prolixity due to excessive fulness and minuteness of detail. The author's strength certainly did not lie in aptitude for generalisation or philosophical insight. Only the few can now be expected to read a work of such magnitude as this, which he devoted to a period of only sixty-three years; but so long as history continues to be studied, a few will always be drawn to its perusal either by inclination or duty, and these will not fail to render it the praise which it merits.[1]

Two political treatises published in France in the sixteenth century have sometimes been referred to, but erroneously, as of an historico-philosophical character—namely, 'Traité de la Servitude Volontaire ou Contre un' of La Boëtie, and the 'Vindiciæ contra tyrannos, Stephano Junio Bruto auctore.' The former, written about 1548, but not published until 1578, is little more than a vague ardent declamation in praise of human equality and republican liberty, forced from a generous youthful heart

[1] On De Thou, see Collinson's Life of Thuanus; Hallam, Lit. of Europe, vol. ii.; and the prize discourses of MM. Patin et Ph. Chasles, Sur la Vie et les Œuvres de J. A. de Thou, 1824.

by contemplation of the misrule and oppression in France under Henry II. It is not in the least learned or profound, but it has lived and will continue to live because of its sincerity, and because its author has been immortalised by the affection of Montaigne.[1] The "Junius Brutus" who wrote "against tyrants" in 1579, is commonly supposed to have been Hubert Languet, although some still contend that he was Duplessis-Mornay. His theory of the right of resistance to monarchs who make wrong enactments is professedly based on Jewish history as recorded in the Old Testament. The book is, however, almost entirely an exposition of political doctrine. There is little history in it, and that little is treated in an unhistorical manner and spirit.[2]

Two other works have to be noticed which concern us somewhat more, although it is exaggeration to speak even of them as specimens of historical philosophy. The 'Franco-Gallia' of the famous Protestant jurist, Francis Hotman, was published in 1573—the year after the Massacre of St Bartholomew. It was composed hastily and in the most adverse circumstances, but is a product of true genius, of great learning, and of a singularly manly nature. It at once made an immense impression, and can never be forgotten in the history either of political theory or of constitutional freedom. It was the first attempt, and a most vigorous attempt, to show that freedom had history as well as reason on its side; that the sovereignty of the people as displayed in the choice of its rulers and the limitation of their powers, could be traced through all epochs of French history; and that the despotic claims and practices of the house of Valois were not time-honoured traditions, but usurpations similar to those against which Gauls and Franks, Carlovingians and Capetians, had equally protested. In a word, the thesis which Hotman sought to establish by a survey of the history of France was the

[1] Leon Feugère, Étude sur la Vie et les Ouvrages de la Boëtie, 1845; and M. Payen, Notice sur la Boëtie, suivie de la Servitude Volontaire, 1853. M. Feugère edited the Œuvres Complètes de la Boëtie in 1846.

[2] Lossen, in a disquisition in the Sitzungsberichte der K. Akad. d. Wissenschaften zu München, 1887, 2, maintains that Duplessis-Mornay was the author of the 'Vindiciæ.' It seems certain that the edition of 1579 was not printed at Edinburgh, as alleged on the title-page. The translation into English, published in 1648, is said to have been the work of Walker, reputed to have been executioner of Charles I.

same which has generally been assumed in England as the justification of popular liberties—that of a right to self-government. which was not merely an abstract dictate of reason, but a something so real and essential that it had always been contended for and more or less possessed. He did not prove all that he believed himself to have proved—he unquestionably erred in details, and made insufficient allowance for the differences of the various periods—but he made good what was of most importance in his contention, and brought into the light the class of historical facts which absolute authority had the strongest interest in seeing left in obscurity. His little book, containing less than two hundred pages, and with three-fourths of it quotations from historians and chroniclers, was, on the whole, a triumphant exhibition of the grounds on which his countrymen were entitled to deem themselves free-born, not merely as men, but also as Frenchmen. If it failed to show that the French monarchy had been elective, it at least succeeded in proving that that monarchy had begun with Louis XI. to enter on a new path fatal to ancient liberties.[1]

Étienne Pasquier (1529-1615) published the first book of his 'Recherches de la France' in 1560, and the second in 1565; five others were added during his lifetime, and three more in 1643. The 'Œuvres d'Étienne Pasquier,' published at Amsterdam in 1723, consists of the 'Recherches' and 'Lettres.' Of the former Augustin Thierry has thus written: "This work is the first in which we meet with what has since been called the philosophy of history. The author, a disciple of the historical school founded by the Italians, and a great admirer of Paulus Emilius, does not confine himself, like Du Haillan, to investigating the plot of political intrigues, or to analysing events according to the method of Machiavelli; he seeks to draw from history moral results, and, above all, to interpret the facts in a new manner—giving them a signification more general and more favourable to the freedom of the human mind. It is with this aim that, in rather a disorderly fashion, he re-

[1] On Hotman see the two articles of M. Dareste in Rev. Hist. t. ii., several articles of M. Vigue in Renouvier's Crit. Rel. 1879, 1880, and Études Littéraires sur les Écrivains Français de la Réformation, par A. Sayous, t. ii. 1-57. The political views of Hotman, as well as of La Boëtie and the author of the 'Vindiciæ,' will be found stated in M. Janet's Hist. d. l. Science Politique.

views all parts of the history of France, events, persons, institutions, manners, customs, language; he reviews them all, and all under his pen assume a fresh appearance of life. Étienne Pasquier is more remarkable for the abundance than for the precision of his ideas; his criticism is sometimes subtle instead of just; but his book was calculated strongly to stir the minds of his contemporaries. It is the only erudite work written in the sixteenth century which one can read through without weariness, and it was reprinted even in last century."

Such is the opinion expressed regarding Pasquier's 'Researches' by an eminently competent judge. In one respect, however, I must entirely dissent from it. There is no philosophy of history in Pasquier's work. His ratiocinations on historical facts sometimes bear a superficial resemblance to those of Machiavelli in his 'Discorsi,' but, instead of being more, they are much less philosophical in character and scope; they are much more about particulars, and show much less insight into the general causes and tendencies of history. The real and distinctive merit of Pasquier is, that he was the first to make a serious and sustained attempt to trace the growth of the institutions of France. This was a very important departure,—the inauguration of a movement which has never since been arrested and which has produced numerous valuable contributions to historical knowledge. Pasquier himself must be admitted to have collected much useful material on various ancient French institutions. Few, I am inclined to believe, will read through his work without weariness, or read through it at all; but those who are in quest of information on the special subjects of which it treats may consult it with profit.

What its subjects are a brief summary will indicate. The first book treats of the character and culture of the Gauls, and the causes which led to their subjugation by the Romans; of the Frankish, Gothic, Burgundian, and Norman invasions; of the origin of the Bretons and Gascons; and of the story of the descent of the Franks from the Trojans, and the difference of opinions as to the nature of their earliest government. The second book is a dissertation on the old French parliaments and provincial assemblies, the functions of the great officers of state, the feudal nobility, and the general distribution of society

into classes, prefaced by a brief discussion as to whether chance or policy, fortune or prudence, had contributed most to the building up of the kingdom of France. The third book traces the growth of the episcopate, the gradual assumption of supremacy by the bishop of Rome, the various conflicts between the Papal See and the Gallican Church, the introduction of ecclesiastical abuses into the realm, the progress of the sect of the Jesuits, and the course of their war on the University. In chapter 44 there is inserted the famous "pladoyer" which the author had delivered in defence of the University and against the Jesuits in the suit before the Parliament of Paris in 1564. The greater portion of the fourth book treats of laws and judicial customs; the rest of it is of a very miscellaneous character. The fifth book relates to Clovis and his descendants of the first dynasty. The sixth book is occupied with the Capetian kings, the good knight Bayard, the fortunes of the house of Anjou, and sundry marvellous stories which Pasquier had the credulity to believe. The seventh book treats of French poetry. The eighth book, after discussing the origin of the French language, attempts, often very unsuccessfully, to account for many peculiar words, idioms, and proverbs. The ninth book contains much information on the history of the University of Paris, on "the Faculties," and on the spread of Roman law and its prevalence over the "droit coutumier." The last book examines the accusations made against Queen Brunehaut by Fredegar, Aimoin, and other chroniclers, and argues that they are to be deemed calumnies. The foregoing summary, short and general although it be, may, by showing what Pasquier's work was, also show what it was not.

II.

The first French writer who took a philosophical view of history was John Bodin. The years between his birth in 1530 and death in 1596 were among the most agitated and eventful in the history of France,—years of social, political, and religious transition and strife, which naturally led thoughtful men to political theorising. And of all who in that age made government and society the subject of reflection, none can be put on

an equality with Bodin as regards comprehensiveness, depth, and truthfulness of insight. The noble moral nature of L'Hôpital enabled him to apprehend as clearly some of the great practical principles of social order, and especially that of religious toleration; but neither L'Hôpital nor any other had such enlarged views of society as an object of science. As a political philosopher, indeed, Bodin had no rival among his contemporaries, and none, at least in his own country, till Montesquieu appeared. He had great native force of intellect, great learning, especially in languages, law, and history, and large legal and political experience, having taught jurisprudence at Toulouse, practised as an advocate in Paris, shared both in Court favour and disgrace under Henri III., performed admirable service as a deputy of the Tiers État in the Assembly of Blois, and filled various important offices of state. It is a striking evidence that even the greatest men may not be exempt from the most irrational prejudices of their age that this broad and sagacious thinker, although sceptical as to all positive religions, should have been an extremely credulous believer in sorcery, the virtues of numbers, and the power of the stars. In the sixteenth century it was still most difficult for the mind to emancipate itself from these delusions.[1]

The 'Republic,' first published in 1576, is undoubtedly by far the greatest of Bodin's works. In the history of the philosophy of government and legislation there are, indeed, few greater works; perhaps, as Sir Wm. Hamilton has affirmed, none in the whole interval between the appearance of the 'Politics' of Aristotle and that of the 'Spirit of Laws' of Montesquieu, although it is certainly inferior to both these treatises.[2] The 'Historic Method' (Methodus ad facilem historiarum cognitionem), published in 1566, has more interest and

[1] The superstitious credulity of Bodin is most completely seen in his Demonomanie des Sorciers, 1581; and his religious freethinking in his Colloquium Heptaplomeres, which remained in manuscript until Guhrauer published extracts of it in 1841, and Noack the whole work in 1857.

[2] Summaries of the 'Republic' sufficient to give a good general view of its character are to be found in Hallam's Lit. of Europe, vol. ii. (1st ed.), Lerminier's Introduction à l'Histoire du Droit, Heron's History of Jurisprudence, Bluntschli's Geschichte des Staatsrechts, and Janet's Hist. d. l. Sc. Pol.; while that in Baudrillart's J. Bodin et son Temps is so exceedingly careful and excellent that scarcely a thought of any value in the original has escaped being indicated.

importance, however, for the student of the philosophy of history than the 'Republic.' Yet it is not a philosophy of history, nor does it even, although the honour is one which M. Baudrillart has claimed for it, lay the foundation of the philosophy of history. It makes itself no pretension of the kind, and is, what it professes to be, not a philosophy of history, but a method of studying and appreciating history.

One sign of the general awakening of interest in the study of history which took place throughout Europe in the sixteenth century, was the appearance of publications on the art of writing, reading, and judging of history. A few works of the kind preceded the treatise of Bodin. One of the earliest of these was the 'Theatrum scribendæ historiæ universæ' of Mylaeus, published at Florence in 1548; the most popular and interesting was Patrizi's 'Della Storia dialoghi x.,' published at Venice in 1560. There was a continuous flow of such works throughout the rest of the sixteenth and almost the whole of the seventeenth century. The 'Penus Artis Historicæ,' a collection of eighteen pieces on the composition and study of history, all with two or three exceptions belonging to the sixteenth century, was published at Basle as early as 1574. The treatise of Bodin differs from the other "historic methods" of the age, not in essence nor as to design, but in involving among its practical directions considerations of scientific value. Its aim is simply to teach how history may be read in an orderly, independent, and profitable manner; not to found, and still less to elaborate a science: a great and arduous task, however, to which even genius is only competent when, circumstances favouring, it strenuously exerts itself with conscious and definite purpose, and an exclusive devotion to its fulfilment.

In the following account of Bodin's treatise I shall only seek to indicate those ideas in it which may be supposed to have some interest for a student of the science of history.

The 'Methodus' begins with a preface in which Bodin discourses on the easiness, pleasantness, and profitableness of historical study—"de facilitate, oblectatione, et utilitate historiæ." Such eulogies of history were coming into fashion when he wrote, and they continued to be much in fashion for at least a hundred and fifty years afterwards. Perhaps the one now

best remembered is Casaubon's preface to Polybius (1609), and it owes the honour chiefly to the merits of its Latinity. The only real present value of any of them is as "signs of the times" in which they appeared; they show us from what motives, or with what expectations and interests, the men of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries turned so eagerly to the writing and reading of history. Bodin and his contemporaries turned eagerly to history, not in order to explain its movement or ascertain its laws, but to find in it intellectual entertainment and practical guidance, materials for their literary and learned pursuits, and especially help in moral and political life. They conceived, in other words, of historical knowledge not as possibly constitutive of, or reducible to, science, but as instrumental and subservient to some end beyond itself. That Bodin should have believed historical study easy, although a very erroneous opinion, will not surprise us, as it is still a prevalent delusion both among the writers and readers of history. As soon as men began adequately to realise the supreme claims of truth in history they ceased to write eulogies on the uses of history; and at the same time they became aware that truth in history is very difficult to reach. This stage had not been attained in Bodin's day.

His 'Methodus' contains ten chapters, the titles of which will be found below.[1] The first thing in it to be noted by us—keeping our special aim in view—is the account given of the nature and place of human history. History in itself is represented as equivalent to true narration or description. This allows of its being divided into human, natural, and divine. Human history has man for its subject, as natural history has the physical world, and divine history God; or, more definitely, its materials are the free actions of men in the widest sense of the term action—all human "consilia, dicta, facta." The distinctive feature of human history is that its subject is constantly changing, whereas God and nature change not; they

[1] The titles referred to are: 1. Quid historia sit, et quotuplex. 2. De ordine historiarum. 3. De locis historiarum recte instituendis. 4. De historicorum delectu. 5. De recto historiarum judicio. 6. De statu rerumpublicarum. 7. Confutatio eorum qui quatuor monarchias aureaque secula statuunt. 8. De temporis universi ratione. 9. Qua ratione populorum origines haberi possint. 10. De historicorum ordine et collectione.

remain ever the same, it remains no instant the same. This its essential characteristic, incessant mutability, has given rise to the belief that no principles pervade it; that no order is to be traced in it, as in the rest of the universe and in other kinds of knowledge. But that belief, although old and prevalent, is erroneous, for man is a soul in union with a body, an immortal spirit immersed in matter; and so, although through the influence of matter there is much which is confused and contradictory in his actions, yet is there in them also eternal principles which reveal a spirit participant of the divine nature, and these principles are capable of being apprehended. It may be thought that there can be no need for going to *human* history for them,—that they will be most readily apprehended directly in *divine* history; but no: to reason from the divine down to the human, instead of rising from the human to the divine, is to reverse the true order of study and begin at the end. Man ought to commence his inquiries with himself, and ascend gradually to the supreme and ultimate cause. And as he is a compound being—soul and body, spiritual and material—his history is connected with that both of nature and of God; through geography with nature, through religion with God. The historian of man must take careful account of the complex constitution and relationships of man, and trace how his history is influenced both by God and nature, both through spiritual and physical forces. Hence two sciences are requisite to the attainment of a satisfactory universal history of man: cosmography, and a general or comparative science of religions.

Bodin argues that history should be studied in an order proceeding from general to particular—from a compendious view of universal history to the detailed and thorough investigation of its several portions—in such a manner that the relations of the parts to one another and the whole may be correctly perceived. He has much to say on collecting and recording under appropriate headings the utterances and incidents fitted to be morally or politically helpful. He devotes considerable space to observations and reflections on such themes as the qualities to be desired in the historian, the rules to be attended to in ascertaining historical facts and judging of historical evidence, the sources of the prejudices often displayed by historical writers,

the merits and defects of various ancient and modern historians, and the like. These are seldom very original or profound, but they are generally judicious. They show that Bodin disliked all rhetorical representations of history ; was distrustful of those writers who delighted in passing judgment on the persons and transactions they described ; and regarded as the true ideal of history a plain and exact exhibition of what had happened as it happened. "Historia nihil aliud esse debeat quam veritatis et rerum gestarum veluti tabula."

Sound as the observations just referred to generally are, we seek in vain among them for traces of scientific insight into the nature of historical method. Yet Bodin consciously realised the existence of historical law. He felt that history was pervaded by law. He owed this conviction to his legal studies. These carried his inquisitive and thoughtful mind at every instant to history, and soon satisfied him that law and history were inseparably bound together all through from beginning to end,—that no part of either was fully intelligible if dissociated from the whole of the other. He sets himself at the very outset—in the very dedication of his 'Historic Method'—in direct and declared antagonism to those who claimed to be philosophical jurists, and yet confined their whole attention to the law of Rome. A philosophical jurist, and not, like Cujas, a mere interpreter of Latin texts, it was his own ambition to be; and he attacked the narrowness of his renowned contemporary not so much, as Hotman did, in the interest of practical utility, as of scientific truth. No study of Roman law, he argues, however complete or accurate, can give more than a partial notion of law. It is absurd to make Roman law identical with or the measure of universal law. There is a universal law, in which all codes of law have their root and rationale, and of which they are but the multiple and partial expressions ; but to reach that law the historians must be consulted as well as the jurists, in order that Persians, Greeks, Egyptians, Hebrews, Spaniards, English, Germans, may all find their due place by the side of the Romans. The idea of universal law, the knowledge of which can only be reached through the methodical study of history as a whole, is central with Bodin, and it is one which still requires to be urged, even in its most general form, on the

thoughtful consideration of our lawyers. It is only in its most general form that Bodin has enunciated it; no clear distinction, for instance, being anywhere drawn by him in this connection between natural and positive law. He clearly saw that the course of human things was an orderly process or development naturally and morally conditioned and regulated, but he had only the vaguest conception of historical law, or of law in any definite sense of the term.

Again, Bodin, as I have already had occasion to mention, clearly apprehended and stated the fact that history has been on the whole a course of progress. The seventh chapter of his 'Method' is on this account of special and permanent interest. The first part of it is an argument to the effect that whatever may be meant by the four monarchies of the prophet Daniel—and Bodin professes himself dissatisfied with all the interpretations—it is *not* meant that history is only a long course of intellectual and moral deterioration. Whatever these monarchies may signify, they are not, as some suggested, the four ages of heathen antiquity. The rest of the chapter is a refutation of the view of historical development which underlies the myth of the four ages, the view that mankind has been in a constant movement of degradation, from an age of gold to an age of iron, becoming ever harder, more barren of good, more audacious in evil. Our author argues that this view is in contradiction to the Biblical history, which tells us so early of the Flood, the tower of Babel, &c.; that, from all that has been reported to us by heathen poets and mythologers of the gods and heroes of the so-called golden age, *it* would seem to have been the true age of iron; that many cruel and unjust customs which prevailed in the palmiest days of Greece and Rome had come to be seen in their true moral light; that Christianity had brought with it some new virtues which were leavening the world; that even the barbarian invasions could be seen to have fulfilled a providential purpose; and that modern times could claim such inventions as the compass and printing, had discovered a new world, and greatly improved astronomy, natural history, medicine, and industry. He compares the advocates of the continuous deterioration of the race—those who fear that learning, humanity, and justice are on the point of disappearing

from the earth to return to their native skies—to old men, sick, sad, and feeble, the burden of whose own infirmities leads them to believe that the world has lost all its virtue, beauty, and goodness, since the days when they were young; and to sailors who should fancy, when launching out from harbour into the open sea, that it was the capes and mountains, the houses and cities, which were withdrawing. It will seem strange to those who are ignorant how slow has been the growth of great ideas, that with so clear a perception of the progress which had pervaded the past, he should have nowhere affirmed that there would be progress in the future. His whole course of reasoning seems to a modern reader to involve, to necessitate, this affirmation; yet nowhere is it made. Nay, instead of it we find phrases (only few, it is true, and these vague and undecided) indicating a belief, or rather suspicion, that human affairs might return to where they had started from, might revolve in a cycle. It was left to a still greater man, born thirty years later, Lord Bacon, to give prominence to the aspect of progress which Bodin overlooked; and it is curious to observe how entirely as to this matter the one was the complement of the other, each seeing only the half-truth. Bodin was singularly just to the past, and loved to dwell on it; he appreciated even the middle ages, which were so misunderstood and calumniated by almost all the reformers, both of religion and of philosophy. Bacon was most unjust to the past, being quite engrossed with the aspirations, the hopes, the ambitions of the future; like his great contemporary and rival in renown, Descartes, he despised the olden world too much to comprehend it—his eye being riveted on prophetic visions of the new world which shone before him, "fresh as a banner bright unfurled."

Bodin, it must be further observed, does not stop short in merely general ideas, but aims at the real explanation of events; he does not rest in the abstract, but tries to account for the concrete. He seeks causes and endeavours to trace their operations in the complex phases of history. He endeavours especially to make apparent the influence of two classes of causes,—physical and political causes. He treats of physical causes with considerable fulness in the fifth chapter of the 'Method,' and in a still more detailed and developed form in the first chapter of the fifth

book of the 'Republic.' That climate has an influence on the character of a people, and that there is a certain correspondence between the geography and the history of a nation, are facts so obvious that they could not fail to be noticed very early, and Hippocrates, Plato, Aristotle, Polybius, and Galen stated them explicitly and definitely; but it is altogether unfair to put their general enunciations of the principle that physical circumstances originate and modify national characteristics, on a level with Bodin's serious, sustained, and elaborate attempt to apply it over a wide area and to a vast number of cases. Dividing nations into northern, middle, and southern, he investigates with wonderful fulness of knowledge how climatic and geographical conditions have affected the bodily strength, the courage, the intelligence, the humanity, the chastity, and, in short, the mind, morals, and manners of their inhabitants; what influence mountains, winds, diversities of soil, &c., have exerted on individuals and societies; and he elicits a vast number of general views, many of which indeed are false, but many of which also are true. It is less than fair to Bodin to say merely, as Hallam has done, that "there is certainly a considerable resemblance to Montesquieu in the chapter on Climates in the 'Republic.'" It would even probably be under the truth to say that one half of the propositions maintained in books xiv.-xviii. of 'The Spirit of Laws' are distinctly laid down in that chapter. Ibn Khaldun excepted, with whose work he was unacquainted, Bodin added much more to what his predecessors had done than Montesquieu to what he had accomplished; and when the interval of time between them, and their consequently different opportunities of amassing appropriate knowledge, are remembered, his treatment of the subject must be deemed the more remarkable of the two. Indeed, if less ingenious than Montesquieu, he is as comprehensive, and, at the same time, not chargeable with obscuring the great truth that man is free, and, through his freedom, fortified by virtue and education, can resist and master external agencies.

For his knowledge of the working of political causes Bodin was greatly indebted to Aristotle. But he made use of what that profound thinker and keen observer taught him in no

servile way, and added to it extensively from his own reflections, his large acquaintance with history, and his varied personal experience. He divides governments into democracies, aristocracies, and monarchies; and tries to detect and delineate the characteristics and conditions of each, and to show how they originate and grow, how they strengthen and consolidate themselves, and how they decline, fall, and perish. He distinguishes revolution from anarchy, the former being a change from one kind of government to another, while the latter is the extinction of government; and he accordingly finds, since the distinct forms of polity are three, that the kinds of revolution are six, each polity being capable of change into two others. All the kinds of revolution may take place from different causes, and may be prevented, or at least delayed, in different ways; and he investigates the manifold causes and counteractives of revolution with care and penetration, and, wherever his astrological superstitions do not lead him astray, with elevation and soundness of judgment. For his views on the operation of physical causes the sixth chapter of the 'Method' ought to be compared with the second, third, and fourth books of the 'Republic,' of which it seems almost like a *résumé*.

Another respect in which the 'Methodus' of Bodin may interest the student of historical science is that in the eighth and ninth chapters there is a specimen of what Dugald Stewart has called conjectural or theoretical history. The eighth chapter is an inquiry into the origin of the world and the epochs of time, and the ninth into the origins of nations. Bodin exaggerates the importance, or at least is mistaken as to the proper position, of this sort of research. He even goes so far as to say that a true idea of the origin of history is the thread which can alone guide us through the labyrinth of history, whereas it is precisely what is most obscure and must remain longest unelucidated. As to the mode in which he conducts the research, there is at least as much to praise as to censure. He tries to show by the use of reason alone the truth of the Mosaic account of the origin of the world as a free creation by God in time. I am sorry to add that he also concludes that the world must have been created in September,

and that in that month the greatest events of history have taken place. He likewise maintains that there will be an end of the world, and refers in proof to the reasons given by "the noble mathematicians" Copernicus, Reinhold, and Stadius for believing that the earth will in course of time fall into the sun. In an independent spirit he criticises and rejects the divisions of history into epochs which were prevalent in his time. He fails, however, to make a satisfactory distribution of his own. The one which he favours is based on an ethnological generalisation set forth in his fifth chapter, referring the achievements and fates of nations to their racial characteristics of body and mind. To the southern peoples he attributes special aptitudes for the acquisition of knowledge and wisdom, to those of the middle or temperate regions political ability and commercial activity, and to those of the north industrial skill and military enterprise; and accordingly, he assigns to universal history three corresponding epochs, the supremacy of southern nations ending with the birth of Christ, and that of the middle nations with the Teutonic invasions. He shows how little the statements of historians as to the origins of nations are in general to be relied on. It cannot be said, however, that he gives much evidence of insight into the principles or method of historical criticism. He insists, at considerable length, on the value of the study of etymologies as a means of throwing light on facts relative to which there is either no written testimony or only such as is false.

In the last year of the sixteenth century Lancelot Voisin de la Popelinière, a zealous Huguenot, published 'L'Histoire des Histoires, avec l'idée de l'histoire accomplie, plus le dessein de l'histoire nouvelle des François.' The work consists of three parts,—(1) a series of general and critical remarks on previous historians; (2) a delineation of the character and duty of a true historian; and (3) a statement of objections to certain fables and hypotheses current as to the origins of French history. It shows its author to have been a man of most independent judgment. The classical historians are boldly denied to be entitled to pass as standards or models for modern historians, whose advantages and resources are described as far superior to theirs;

and, at the same time, modern historians are freely censured for their credulity and incompetence. This remarkable independence of mind was, however, not supported by remarkable talent, or extraordinary research, or literary skill. The influence of Popelinière's work was, so far as I can trace it, neither wide nor deep. He had also published in 1581 a work which may be regarded as a precursor of the Universal Histories of De Thou and D'Aubigné, his 'Histoire de France, enrichie des plus notables occurrences survenues en provinces de l'Europe et pays voisins, soit en paix, soit en guerre, tant pour le fait séculier qu'ecclésiastique, depuis l'an 1550 jusqu'à ces temps' —*i.e.*, to the year 1577. De Thou consulted it with profit; D'Aubigné has spoken of it in terms of high praise.[1]

[1] M. Auguste Poirson, who has given in the fourth volume of his 'Histoire du Règne de Henri IV.' a full account of the historiography of the period of which he treats (pp. 272-341, 2d ed.), describes Popelinière as "ce Polybe du temps, ce créateur de l'histoire générale, aujourd'hui à peu près ignoré chez nous, à notre honte."

CHAPTER II.

HISTORIOGRAPHY AND HISTORICAL REFLECTION IN FRANCE IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY: BOSSUET.

I.

Henry IV., notwithstanding serious faults and deep inconsistencies of character, was the greatest and best French monarch of modern times. By his military skill, his political foresight, his enlightened patriotism, his enforcement of religious toleration, and the wisdom of his administration, he secured to his country internal peace, and laid the foundation of that external policy which saved Europe from the despotism of the house of Austria, and made France for long the leading nation in the world. Richelieu, under Louis XIII., proceeded on the same lines, with a clearness of view, a persistency of purpose, a fertility of resource, and a subtilty in the employment of means for the attainment of his ends, probably never surpassed. Unfortunately he also crushed internal liberties in a way which Henry IV. would not have done, and which proved not less productive of disasters in the distant future than of immediate advantages. Mazarin adroitly carried out the plans of his predecessor, baffled personal enemies, and suppressed all efforts and possibilities of resistance to royal authority. On Mazarin's decease in 1661, Louis XIV. took all power into his own hands, and thenceforth until his death in 1715 ruled entirely according to the pleasure of his own will. During his reign France had all the glory which absolute monarchy could confer upon her, but she had no personality apart from the individuality of her sovereign. His will was her law; and he

might well say, "L'État, c'est moi." The throne was regarded with a servile and idolatrous reverence which it is difficult now to realise. The king was feared and obeyed as if he were a god. The daily atmosphere in which he lived was one filled with the incense of semi-divine honours. Under the shadow of the throne, and in close alliance with it, there flourished the tyranny of the Church. By the mass of the nation no opposition was offered, or so much as thought of, to either; the most abject submission was demanded and unmurmuringly rendered. Disbelief and discontent were not, indeed, extinct, but they dared not avow themselves; they kept silence or expressed themselves in guarded whispers.

The history of France in the seventeenth century was substantially the history of the growth and triumph of absolutism, —an absolutism guided by statesmen of genius, served by great administrators and famed generals, and glorified by orators, authors, and artists of classic excellence and world-wide renown. This fact profoundly influenced the development of historiography in France during the century. The Muse of history was gradually enticed and constrained to become a lady of the Court. She was taught to attach supreme value to dignity of deportment and elegance of speech, to feel more ashamed of rusticity than of mortal sin, and to be more afraid of unpoliteness than of untruthfulness. But, it must be added, she never felt fully at home at Court, and prospered there much less than most of her sisters. The historical literature of the age of Louis XIV. could not, for example, compare in brilliance with its oratorical or dramatic literature; indeed, royal patronage, even when most potent and munificent, called into existence singularly few historical works entitled to be ranked as literature. But, under the constraint and tuition of monarchs and ministers, French historiography gradually lost the originality and audacity, and the sporadic and fragmentary, passionate and polemic, character which it had in the sixteenth century. It gradually grew tame, methodical, laboriously erudite, respectful and even servile towards authority.

The sixteenth century was predominantly an age of pamphlets and occasional writings meant for defence or attack. The seventeenth century was predominantly an age of collec-

tions and compilations, and, in a lesser degree, of works designed to gain favour as literature. The "Memoir" was common to both centuries, but only reached its full maturity of development in the latter. This form of historical composition has, in fact, never in any land or age been cultivated with so much success as in France during the seventeenth century. Many of the men who contributed most effectively to the making of the history of France in the seventeenth century also applied themselves to describe it so far as it affected their experience or was affected by their activity; and, in so doing, they wrote with the naturalness of men who were not seeking literary fame, and with the freedom of men who had in view only posthumous publication. The Memoirs of Sully, Bassompierre, Rohan, Richelieu, Retz, Rochefoucauld, Saint-Simon, and of many others who might be named, are inexhaustible sources of psychological, political, and historical instruction. They require, indeed, to be, for the most part, used with caution and even suspicion, and strictly tested and checked; but, rightly employed, they lead us far more deeply into the real life of the times to which they relate than the works of the professional or official historians. The most important memoirs written in the seventeenth century were, of course, not published until the arrival of times of greater liberty.

During the seventeenth century the Jansenists, still more the Jesuits and Oratorians, and most of all the Benedictines, distinguished themselves by their industry and zeal in historical research. Their services, which are hardly to be overestimated, cannot, however, be here described or even enumerated. It was only in the seventeenth century that the study of medieval history, and of the history of the Christian Church, began to be prosecuted with comprehensiveness and thoroughness. The best historical work done in France during the period was the work of erudite preparation for history,—that of such men as Duchesne, Ducange, Petau, D'Achery, Beluze, Labbe, Sismond, Mabillon, and their many worthy associates. Powerful as was the will of the Government, it could not prevent independence of judgment and the exercise of criticism in regard to matters of erudition. It was unable to suppress even such extreme scepticism as the Abbé Hardouin expressed regarding classical

and medieval history, or such critical boldness as Richard Simon displayed in his treatment of Biblical history. Both Gallicanism and Jansenism exerted a good effect on ecclesiastical historiography; and the ecclesiastical historians of the period were at least equal to its civil historians. Le Nain de Tillemont showed excellent historical qualifications, although his works are rather compilations drawn with the most accurate and conscientious diligence from the best sources, supplemented by learned and exact investigation of questions of difficulty, than finished histories. His most extensive composition, indeed, professes no more, as its very title indicates: 'Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire ecclésiastique des six premiers siècles'; and his 'Histoire des Empereurs' is of the same character.

Scipion Dupleix and François-Eudes de Mezeray acquired reputation in the department of civil history. The popularity of the former soon passed away. He wrote 'L'Histoire générale de la France avec l'état de l'Église et de l'Empire' (3 vols., 1621-43). He was not lacking in learning, but he was credulous and bigoted. He accepted a large amount of fabulous material as genuine history; did not even hesitate to represent as real incidents mere inventions of his own imagination; and judged of persons and events under the influence of strong religious and political passions. He had little artistic skill.

The popularity of Mezeray as an historian lasted for about a century. He presented his work to the public in two forms,—a larger, 'Histoire de France depuis Faramond jusqu'au Règne de Louis le Juste' (1621-1643, 3 vols. fol.), and a smaller, 'Abrégé Chronologique de l'Histoire de France' (1668, 3 vols.) The latter was the more esteemed, and it passed through many editions. Mezeray's was the first really well-written general history of France; and it was extremely well written,—always clear and natural in style, and not infrequently animated and eloquent. It was, further, a truly national history, describing not merely the growth of the French monarchy, but of the French people. It portrayed the characters and conduct of kings and their ministers with rare honesty; it neither ignored nor glossed over administrative abuses, and the wrongs and sufferings inflicted on the peasantry and traders; it dwelt, as

no previous historical work had done, on the general economic and social condition of the community, and on the state of the towns and provinces. It showed its author to be a man of honest, humane, and sympathetic heart; and it displayed an independence of mind which cost him his pension as royal historiographer, but did him the highest honour. It had, however, one serious defect which greatly detracted from its value and necessarily shortened the duration of its reputation. Its statements cannot be relied on; they have not been drawn from primary and trustworthy sources; they are unsupported by evidence sufficiently tested; and, in fact, they are almost as often false as true. With not a few excellent qualities, therefore, the work cannot be pronounced a good history; it wholly fails to meet the first and most essential of historical requirements.

Historical art, unlike historical research, made no progress in France during the last forty years of the seventeenth century. The works of writers like Maimbourg and Varillas were, indeed, widely read, but they deserved little of the approbation which for a season they obtained. They are to be numbered among the signs of that moral and intellectual decay which Mr Buckle has so conclusively shown to have resulted in all departments of literature from the system of government in operation under Louis XIV.

No work of much importance on historic art or method appeared in France during the seventeenth century. The subject was touched on by many, but treated with depth of insight or investigated with care by none. La Mothe le Vayer, courtier, academician, and preceptor of the brother of Louis XV., endeavoured to find in history confirmation and illustrations of scepticism. He sought to show that opinions and practices were so inconsistent, and that reason in all directions led to such uncertain results, that a wise man will doubt of all things except divinely revealed truths. He based his scepticism on history, and was at the same time sceptical in regard to history. This is seen most clearly in his 'Discours du peu de certitude en l'Histoire' (1668). His earlier 'Discours de l'Histoire' (1636) is, in the main, a criticism of the Spanish historian Sandoval from a French point of view; but it also ridicules effectively

the way in which historians were accustomed to trace the descent of noble families from famous personages of remote antiquity, and indicates forcibly how the judgments of historians are perverted by national prejudices and personal interests. He was a great admirer of the classic authors, and urged his contemporaries to take the Greek and Roman historians as their models in historiography. He was the immediate predecessor, the direct precursor, of Bayle, by whom his writings are often quoted.[1]

The 'Discours des conditions de l'Histoire' (1632) of De Silhon calls for no special notice. The anonymous 'La Science de l'Histoire' (1665) has an attractive title, but is a poor book. It contains nothing of a scientific character. It consists of twenty-two short chapters, which, with the exception only of the first and last, refer to the histories of particular nations and provinces. It has been attributed to Charles Sorel, but erroneously, as I infer from the way in which Sorel wrote in his 'Science Universelle' (tom. iv. pp. 90, 91), published in 1668.

Father Le Moyne's 'De l'Histoire,' 1670, translated into English in 1694, is a rhetorical and affected composition, without any solid merits. The judgments pronounced by it on historians like Thucydides and Sallust are unwarranted and presumptuous. One of the seven dissertations of which it consists is a defence of the introduction of feigned speeches into history, but it is entirely destitute even of ingenuity in error.

The Abbé De Saint-Real published in 1671 a treatise 'De l'usage de l'Histoire.' It proceeds on the supposition that history is unprofitable if treated merely as a record of events, and only of value in so far as it enables us to know men; and that to know men is to know their motives, passions, follies, and illusions. The assumption is applied in an attempt to prove that brilliant actions have often originated in extravagance and stupidity; that human sentiments and deeds have been largely influenced by malignity; that almost all that men

[1] The last or Dresden edition of La Mothe le Vayer's works consists of fourteen vols. 8vo, 1756-59. There is a good monograph—'Essai sur la Mothe le Vayer'—by L. Étienne, published at Rennes, 1849.

do has been prompted and pervaded by vanity; and that universally and irresistibly the senses of men have been perverted, their reasons deluded, and their convictions determined, by the force of prevalent opinion. In a word, according to Saint-Real, the proper study of mankind is man, and the great advantage to be derived from the study is a knowledge of the meanness and contemptibleness of man.

In 1677 Father Rapin published his 'Instructions sur l'Histoire.' Having carefully read the various compositions which had appeared during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries on the way in which history should be written, he adopted what was valuable in them, and largely supplemented it by his own reflections. The result was a treatise much superior as regards both comprehensiveness and judiciousness to any of its predecessors; the first fairly adequate treatment of history as a species of literature, or of what has been called the rhetoric of history.

It is in the latter half of the sixteenth century that we first meet with comparative studies in literature. Father Rapin's 'Comparaison de Thucydide et de Live' (1681) is an instance of the kind in the department of historical literature; but one of higher merit is Saint-Evremond's 'Considerations sur Salluste et Tacite.' This witty, epicurean *habitué* of the Court of our Charles II. has shown, at least at times, a keenness and originality of observation and insight, in regard both to history and the art of history, very exceptional in his age. These qualities are displayed in a high degree both in his 'Considerations sur le Génie du peuple Romain' (1695) and in his 'Characterisations of Classical and French Historians.'

In the last decade of the century the Oratorian priest, Father Thomassin, published a 'Méthode d'étudier et d'enseigner chrétienment et solidement les historiens profanes.' It is divided into three books. The first is a sketch of the history of man, of the succession of empires, from the creation of the world to the establishment of Christianity; the second is an attempt to show that the ancient historians supply confirmation of the chief truths of religion; and the third endeavours to prove that they equally bear witness to the validity and prevalence of the principles of morality. The work gives evidence

of diligent reading, but its worth lies almost entirely in its quotations.

The philosophy of the seventeenth century did not aim at interpreting and comprehending history ; at tracing the movement of reason through the complications and aberrations of human affairs. It showed scarcely any interest in the explanation of social phenomena. A thorough and fruitful blending of philosophy and history was as yet in the far future; a general recognition of its possibility and desirableness will be sought for in vain in any century but the present.

The French philosophy of the seventeenth century assumed two forms, a negative or sceptical and a positive or rational. The scepticism which was represented in the sixteenth century by Rabelais, Montaigne, and Charron, was propagated in the seventeenth by Le Vayer, Huet, and Bayle. But Bishop Huet, although a sceptic and an historian, showed no scepticism as an historian. It was otherwise with Le Vayer, as has already been indicated, and especially with Peter Bayle, the famed author of the 'Dictionnaire Critique.' The latter is, perhaps, the best example which the history of literature supplies of what has been called "erudite scepticism,"—the scepticism which finds in historical learning an arsenal of weapons both for defence and attack,—the scepticism which Bayle himself designated "historical Pyrrhonism." He had an insatiable and undiscriminating curiosity regarding facts and opinions, wonderful logical dexterity, extreme ingenuity in inventing and great fondness for maintaining paradoxes. With but feeble cravings either for fixed principles or for unity and harmony in his speculations, a want of moral delicacy, and no profound religious emotions, he was animated by a sincere love of independence of thought, and a cordial hatred of intolerance and persecution. The whole constitution of his nature, his personal experience of life, and his special acquirements, rendered him a most powerful assailant of dogmatism; and he was unsurpassed in the art of so suggesting and accumulating doubts regarding particular questions and opinions of every kind as to produce universal doubt, a feeling of the uncertainty of all that professes to be knowledge. Under cover of the assumption of the opposition of reason and faith, he skilfully laboured

to humiliate both, by convicting the former of inability to discover truth with certainty, and the latter of teaching absurdities with a claim to impunity. "My talent," he said, "is to form doubts, which for me remain merely doubts;" and he unquestionably put out his talent to usury, suggesting and spreading doubts with a success unattained by any man before him in Christendom. In the seventeenth century the talent was on the whole a valuable one, and the diligent exercise of it highly beneficial. It was so, at least, as regards historiography, which suffered greatly from credulity and submissiveness to traditional and dogmatic authorities. No man of the seventeenth century contributed so much to the historical scepticism and historical criticism of the eighteenth century as Bayle. His influence was felt most in France, but it told powerfully also in England and Germany; its range was European.[1]

The dominant philosophy in France in the seventeenth century was the Cartesian. In 1637—that is, eighty years after the appearance of Bodin's 'Historic Method'—Descartes published his 'Discours de la Méthode.' It had for avowed aim to effect a general revolution in human thought, to determine once for all the method of rightly conducting the reason in the search for scientific truth, and to prove convincingly that it was the right method by showing the number and value of the results to which it led. It so far accomplished its end that the name of René Descartes stands by universal consent, along with that of our own Francis Bacon, at the head of the modern epoch of philosophy. With them the world shook itself finally loose from the grasp of scholasticism, and definitively entered on the path which it is still pursuing. They had many predecessors, among whom were not a few martyrs, but it was given only to them decisively to succeed, partly owing to the labours of others and the ripeness of the times, and partly owing to the greatness of their own abilities and the merits of their own works.

Vast, however, as was the influence of Descartes, it cannot

[1] A. Deschamps, 'La Genèse du Scepticisme érudit chez Bayle,' Liége, 1878; L. Feuerbach, 'Pierre Bayle: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Philosophie und Menschheit' (Sämmtliche Werke, Bd. vi.)

be said to have done much, directly and explicitly at least, for the study of history. He was early satisfied that he had read histories enough; he had no notion of a science of history; and he so little perceived an indwelling reason in society pervading and determining its movements and changes that he could expressly declare it as his belief that "laws which have grown up gradually as required by national wants, as suggested by experience of the evil effects of particular crimes and disputes, must necessarily be inferior to those which have been invented and imposed by individual wisdom and authority, just as buildings which different persons have tried to improve by making use of old walls for other than their original purposes must be inferior to buildings designed and executed by a single architect, and just as ancient cities which, from being at first only villages, have grown up in the course of time into large towns, cannot compare in regularity and symmetry with towns which have been built on a uniform plan devised by one person."[1] In fact, Descartes conceived of philosophy in a way which scarcely allowed of there being any philosophy of history, and which led naturally to the neglect and depreciation of all historical study. In historical research the mind is conversant with contingent phenomena, and must content itself with probable evidence. But Descartes placed the criterion of truth in the clearness and distinctness of the convictions of the individual mind, and insisted that reason ought to be satisfied only with necessary truth and with the conclusions which can be deduced therefrom with mathematical strictness. These views, with his contempt for antiquity, and confidence in his own powers and method, not only prevented his recognising the interest and importance of historical study, but caused him to regard with aversion every kind of erudition which historical study requires. His followers in general entertained the same feeling. Malebranche reproached D'Aguesseau for wasting his time in reading Thucydides. It was only with the decay of Cartesianism that historical science began to flourish in France. And in Italy, early in the eighteenth century, the illustrious Vico is found complaining bitterly that the spread of this philo-

[1] Discours de la Méthode (ed. Simon), p. 8.

sophy has been ruinous to the cause of learning. Undoubtedly Cartesianism was not essentially favourable to historical study. It was, however, not altogether unfavourable. On the contrary, it demanded and fostered an independence of mind which is nowhere more needed than in historical inquiry and speculation ; it spread among all thoughtful men the conviction that the infinite variety of phenomena in the universe might be reduced to a very few simple laws ; and it gave general currency to the idea of progress. Descartes shows incidentally in many passages of his writings that he had looked on social facts with a clear keen eye. And so does Malebranche. Faith in progress, confidence in the powers of the human mind and in the grandeur of the future destinies of the human race, associated, as in Lord Bacon, with contempt for antiquity, pervade the entire philosophy of Descartes, and frequently find expression in his writings. In Malebranche, both the confidence and the contempt perhaps reached their height ; but they may be traced in some measure through most works belonging to the Cartesian school. The conception which Bacon expressed in the adage, *Antiquitas sæculi juventus mundi,* is to be found also both in Descartes [1] and Malebranche.[2] Pascal, however, has surpassed all others in his felicitous statement of it : "The whole succession of human beings throughout the whole course of ages must be regarded as a single individual man, continually living and continually learning ; and this shows how unwarranted is the deference we yield to the philosophers of antiquity ; for, as old age is most distant from infancy, it must be manifest to all that old age in the universal man should not be sought in the times near his birth, but in the times most distant from it. Those whom we call the ancients are really those who lived in the youth of the world, and the true infancy of man ; and as we have added the experience of the ages between us and them to what they knew, it is only in ourselves that is to be found that antiquity which we venerate in others." [3]

[1] Baillet, Vie de Descartes, vii. 10 ; Discours de la Méthode (ed. Cousin), pp. 125, 126, 192-194, 219, &c.

[2] Recherche de la Vérité, 11e partie, c. v. and vi., &c.

[3] Pensées, i. 91-101 (ed. Faugère).

The historian of the idea of progress will find ample materials for a chapter, both amusing and instructive, in a controversy which gave rise to much heat and noise, during the seventeenth century, in France as well as in Italy and England, concerning the relative merits of the ancients and moderns. Some knowledge of its character and course is well worth acquiring, from its being so eminently characteristic of an age almost equally influenced by reformatory philosophic tendencies and by scholastic and classic traditions. In no former age had men ever dreamt of contesting the superiority of ancient to modern literature. That a large body of authors of moderate abilities and of no extraordinary courage should now have ventured to attack classical authority in the rudest and crudest manner, proved that an enormous change had taken place in human thoughts and habits. A very slight acquaintance with the dispute suffices to show that most of those who exalted the writers of antiquity, and of those who depreciated them, alike did so on false grounds; the former admiring them for excellences which did not exist, and the latter censuring as defects what were really excellences. It would be out of place, however, to treat here of the merits and demerits of the two parties. It is enough to direct attention to the very obvious circumstance that the controversy turned on the idea of progress, and tended to give prominence to that idea, to promote its circulation, and to make it the subject of reflection and criticism. Necessarily, it found frequent expression, and not seldom exaggerated expression, from those who, like Boisrobert, Perrault, Lamotte, and Terrason, took the part of the moderns. The question which they discussed was not merely the vague and futile one as to the comparative merits of ancient and modern authors, but, in the main, the question as to whether the movement of civilisation was towards improvement or deterioration. One regrets to find that a man of the knowledge and talent of Macaulay could have shown himself, in his essay on Sir William Temple, capable only of perceiving in the controversy a "battle of the books," and, indeed, only the ridiculous aspects of it as such. He had simply to glance through the most celebrated book published in the controversy, Perrault's 'Parallèle entre les anciens et les modernes' (1690), and he must have seen that what was sub-

stantial and vital in it was the attempt to prove by a survey of architecture, sculpture, painting, eloquence, history, and poetry, science, philosophy, and religion, that men ought not to look back to the age even of Pericles or Augustus for models of absolute perfection and perpetual imitation, but should proceed on the conviction that inexhaustible possibilities of achievement still lay before them in all directions. This conclusion cannot be set aside by pointing out that Perrault was unacquainted with Greek, and had the bad taste, or, rather, ignorant audacity, to pronounce Homer inferior to Scudéri and Chapelain. Perrault accepted all that Bacon and Pascal had affirmed of progress, and dwelt much more distinctly and emphatically on the indefinite perfectibility of human nature, which he strikingly contrasted with the immobility of the merely animal nature. He refused to admit that the progressive movement of civilisation had ever met with any real interruption. To the objection that ages of barbarism had been seen to succeed ages of culture, he replied by the comparison of the arts and sciences to those rivers which, after precipitating themselves suddenly into an abyss, flow for a while under ground, but emerge again into the light with undiminished fulness and force: "Cette interruption n'est qu'apparente; on peut comparer les sciences et les arts à ces fleuves qui viennent à rencontrer un gouffre où ils s'abîment tout-à-coup, mais qui, après avoir coulé sous terre, trouvent enfin une ouverture par où on les voit ressortir avec la même abondance qu'ils y était entrées." He added, that humanity has had its different ages, each of which has passed through a natural series of phases; and further, that "the human race must be considered as an eternal man, so that the life of humanity has had, like the life of a man, its infancy and youth, is at present in its maturity, and will know no decline."

Fontenelle, whose life of one hundred years' duration connected the great age of French literature under Louis XIV. with that which preceded the Revolution, took part in the discussion, and displayed his characteristic ingenuity. He granted that the lapse of ages makes no considerable difference on the constitution and faculties of human nature, yet ascribed to the moderns a superiority over the ancients, inasmuch as the

generations which arrive late on the stage of existence must inherit the intellectual advantages acquired by the toils of the generations which preceded them. Drawing a sharp distinction between the sciences and the arts, he argued that the former, being dependent on experience, can only be slowly matured, while the latter, being dependent chiefly on liveliness and force of imagination, may attain easily and rapidly a very high perfection. He likewise threw out a conception which has a certain interest from having been substantially reproduced by Saint-Simon and Littré, both believing it to be an important original discovery. The conception as stated by Fontenelle is that the life of each nation has ages corresponding to the ages of the life of an individual. In infancy individuals and nations are absorbed in the satisfaction of their physical wants ; in youth they are chiefly occupied with poetry and art ; and in manhood with science and philosophy. Like Perrault, he supposes that humanity will escape decay and extinction. "This man, who has lived from the beginning of the world to the present time, will have no old age ; he will be always as capable as ever of doing the things for which he was fitted in youth, and he will be more and more able to accomplish those which are appropriate to his manhood ; in other words, and to drop allegory, men will never degenerate." [1]

The Abbé de Saint-Pierre (1658-1743) was another connecting link between the seventeenth and the eighteenth century. He was a still more enthusiastic believer in human perfectibility and in historical progress than Fontenelle. His ardent faith in them led him to devise a multitude of schemes for individual and social improvement which seemed to most of his contemporaries mere dreams, but which were rarely altogether dreams, and which even when dreams were of the kind that precede and cause awakening. He was a precursor of Turgot and Condorcet. Those who wish to make themselves adequately acquainted with the views of this remarkable man,—"this dreamer who," as Madame Sand says, "saw more clearly than all his contemporaries,"—may be referred to the works of Molinari ('L'Abbé de Saint-Pierre, sa vie et ses œuvres') and of Goumy ('Étude sur la vie et les ecrits de l'Abbé de Saint-Pierre').

[1] Œuvres (ed. 1764), tom. iv. p. 126. See also pp. 119-126, and pp. 88-113.

The so-called "querelle des anciens et des modernes" was not merely the foolish and unprofitable controversy which it is widely believed to have been. In the course of it the idea of progress was greatly developed, and men's views as to what were and were not legitimate inferences from it became much more correct and definite.[1]

II.

The only work published in France during the seventeenth century which has any claim to a separate and special consideration from us is the 'Discours sur l'Histoire Universelle' of Bishop Bossuet. It appeared in 1681, having been written for the use of the Dauphin of France to whom Bossuet was preceptor. Its author was a man of lofty and comprehensive mind, of rare practical clearness of judgment, of a strong and disinterested character; the brightest glory of the Gallican Church; the most skilful expositor and champion of the Catholic faith in modern times; and a sacred orator of overpowering eloquence. No one represented more perfectly what was attractive and imposing in the age of Louis XIV., realised more fully its ideal of intellectual power and grandeur, or embodied better the qualities it admired most. But he did not rise above his age; his was not a prophetic or creative mind; his spirit was not of the kind which anticipates and dominates the future. He was an admirable believer, much inferior as a seeker of truth, incapable of doubting, and without sympathy for independence of opinion. He estimated authority too highly, and liberty too lightly; he was too much of the courtier and the bishop, too little of the man and the citizen. He felt certain of whatever the Church taught; he considered the exercise of force and severity against heretics as conduct agreeable to God; he was an advocate of absolutism, royal and sacerdotal; he had for the monarchy an idolatrous veneration,

[1] There is a very learned 'Histoire de la querelle des anciens et des modernes' (1856), by Hippolyte Rigault, and good chapters relating to it in A. Michiel's 'Histoire des idées littéraires en France au xixe siècle.' There is much ingenious theorising on the main question of the controversy in the work of M. Véron, 'Du progrès intellectuel dans l'humanité.'

which, although common in his age, was unworthy of any man, and most unworthy of such a man.[1]

The 'Discourse' is, unquestionably, characterised by great genius. The simplest sentences place before us the sublimest pictures. Every word is what it ought to be; every line has a majestic grace; and the effect of the whole is singularly impressive. But the genius displayed is not scientific or philosophical but oratorical genius. The profundity, the penetration, the originality which have been ascribed to the book, are not in it. What one really finds in it are elevation of thought, admirable arrangement, and a magnificent style.

While it is an error to ascribe great originality to the conception or plan formed and carried out by Bossuet, it is equally an error to deny to it any. True, centuries before him the writers of Scripture had plainly taught that God rules over nations, raises up and casts down kings and peoples according to His sovereign pleasure, and purposes to establish on earth a kingdom of holiness; but the clearest and most emphatic affirmations to this effect fall far short of an attempt to exhibit the series of the ages and the world of empires as a system of law and order regulated and pervaded by the wisdom and will of Deity. All that the prophets and apostles declared as to Divine Providence could be assented to by those who had no proper conception of a universal history, or of the place and significance of nations in a scheme of human development, just as the first chapter of Genesis could be accepted ages before the origination of geology. Bossuet's historical doctrine is much more closely connected with that of Augustine than with the simple germs of historical doctrine contained in Scripture; but it is no mere restatement even of Augustine's theory. The central conception of the Augustinian

[1] Bossuet has, of course, a prominent place in all histories of French literature. The most important of the biographical works regarding him are Bausset's 'Histoire de Bossuet,' 4 vols., 1819; Tabaraud's 'Supplément aux histoires de Bossuet et de Fénélon,' 1822; Floquet's 'Études sur la vie de Bossuet,' 3 vols.; and Réaume's 'Histoire de J. B. Bossuet et de ses Œuvres,' 3 vols., 1869-70. His historical philosophy has been touched on by Sismondi, Cousin, Jouffroy, Caro, and others, and treated of at greater length by Buckle (Hist. of Civ. in England, vol. i.), Laurent (Phil. de l'Histoire), Rougemont (Les Deux Cités, vol. ii.), and Mayr (Geschichtsauffassung der Neuzeit).

historical doctrine—the conflict of *the two cities*—holds a very subordinate place in Bossuet's work, and is only present at all in a greatly modified character. The harsh predestinarian dualism so fundamental and so conspicuous in the 'De Civitate Dei' has almost disappeared from the 'Discours.' Further, while the historical constituents of the former work are inextricably commingled with apologetic, polemic, mythological, theological, and moral disquisitions, in the latter the survey of history stands out with comparative purity and clearness. The history is viewed in a religious light, but in that light it is presented as a rationally connected and orderly developed whole. There is nothing in Augustine's work which corresponds to the Third Part of Bossuet's, which is, however, to the historical philosopher by far its most interesting and valuable portion.

Bossuet was not endowed with the originality which makes discoveries and produces new views, but only with such originality as apprehends with perfect clearness the highest thoughts in general circulation, separates them with extraordinary judgment from antiquated and inferior notions, and expresses them with surpassing skill. He had not the originality which would have placed him in advance of his age, and at a distance from it, but simply that which placed him in the front rank of the men of his age.

The primary purpose of his work was, he informs us, to be to the histories of particular peoples and epochs what a general map is to maps of particular countries; its aim was to show how nation is bound to nation, generation to generation. It only, however, accomplishes this purpose very imperfectly, since scarcely any relations are exhibited in it except theological ones. It consists of three parts,—a chronological distribution of the events of history from the creation of the world to the reign of Charlemagne, a sketch of the course of true religion, and a survey of the rise and fall of empires. This division has been criticised as inartistic, and involving repetitions, seeing that the sacred and secular events treated of together in the first part are in the two following parts again dealt with separately. But it has to be remembered, that although Bossuet was a great artist, his chief design in writing the

'Discourse on Universal History' was not to produce a work of art, any more than of science or philosophy, but to attain a practical and educational end. His aim was to exhibit history in such a light as would convey to his pupil and his readers the religious and political impressions which he believed history to be especially meant to impart. His work could not be better planned with a view to the attainment of his end.

In the First Part history is divided into twelve epochs. Of these, the first is said to have begun with the creation of Adam, B.C. 4004; the second with the flood of Noah, B.C. 2348; the third with the calling of Abraham, B.C. 1921; the fourth with the giving of the law to Moses, B.C. 1491; the fifth with the capture of Troy, B.C. 1124; the sixth with the dedication of Solomon's temple, B.C. 1004; the seventh with the foundation of Rome, B.C. 784; the eighth with the restoration of the Jews by the edict of Cyrus, B.C. 536; the ninth with the taking of Carthage by Scipio, B.C. 200; the tenth with the birth of Christ; the eleventh with Constantine's public adoption of Christianity (A.D. 312); and the twelfth with the coronation by Pope Leo of Charlemagne as Emperor of the Romans, A.D. 800. These twelve periods are regarded as reducible to seven ages, which are said to have begun respectively with Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Solomon, Cyrus, and Christ. Further, both epochs and ages are regarded as included in three great periods: namely, that of the law of nature, which was prior to Moses; that of the written law, which extended from Moses to Christ; and that of grace. When it is observed that seven out of the twelve epochs, all the ages and all the periods, are dated according to Biblical indications and with reference to the fortunes of the people of Israel, it will be understood that the 'Discourse' of Bossuet is very far from answering fully to its title, or from really dealing with universal history.

The First Part of Bossuet's treatise is thus to a large extent a summary of Biblical history as recorded in the Biblical books. As such it is truly admirable, and probably even to this day unsurpassed. It is marvellous how much Bossuet manages to say in a few words, and how apt, picturesque, and impressive these are. The order is perfect; every statement is in its place;

every fact is so set as to be seen in the light of its relationships. There is no overcrowding of the narrative with details, or compressing together of things different in nature and unequal in significance. Masterly ease, thorough naturalness, just proportions, a beautiful harmony are everywhere apparent.

On the other hand, Bossuet accepted the Biblical books as historical authorities in an uncritical manner. He did not suppose that any inquiry into the sources and character of the Biblical histories was necessary, or even permissible. He supposed that their authors wrote with infallible knowledge, and that there could be no error in their statements. In this respect he fully shared the general belief of his age, which is still the belief of the Catholic Church, and a prevalent belief in most Protestant Churches. His uncritical procedure was therefore a natural and venial fault. Still it was a fault; and it has to be remembered in this connection, that Bossuet took a prominent and deplorable part in the attempt to suppress a work far superior in scientific merit to anything which he was himself capable of producing—namely, the first history of the Old Testament as a literary product, the 'Histoire Critique du Vieux Testament' (1678) of Richard Simon. Bossuet had not that complete intellectual truthfulness which is the first and main characteristic of the scientific spirit, and therefore he could not bear without pain and aversion the light of scientific criticism.

The chronology of his historical sketch has been much praised by some writers. In reality, it was simply taken, without acknowledgment, from Usher.

The Second Part of the 'Discourse' delineates the course of religion—*la suite de la religion.* Religion is regarded as confined to Jews and Christians. In heathendom nothing is seen save idolatry. And idolatry is viewed as utter extravagance, the strength of which lies in what its foolishness attests, the weakness of reason. To this cause, aided by sense, interest, ignorance, a false reverence for antiquity, policy, philosophy, and heresy, the extent of its sway and the difficulty of dislodging it, are traced. The history of religion is for Bossuet, as for Augustine, the history of the people of God, or of the *civitas Dei;* but he does not, like Augustine, identify the

people of God with a certain number of persons specially predestinated to eternal life. He understands the *civitas Dei* to be a really historical community and kingdom, the people of Israel under the old dispensation and the Christian Church under the new. At the same time, he does not contradict, but, on the contrary, he accepts the Pauline and Augustinian view of an Israel within Israel, of a narrower and a wider election.

In the Second Part of his work, then, Bossuet seeks to describe "the different states of the people of God under the law of nature and under the patriarchs; under Moses and under the written law; under David and under the prophets; during the time between the return from the captivity and Jesus Christ; and finally, under Jesus Christ Himself—that is to say, under the law of grace and under the Gospel; in the ages which looked forward to Messiah and in those to which he has appeared; in those in which the worship of God is confined to a single people and in those in which, as foretold in the ancient prophecies, it has been diffused over the whole earth; in those, in fine, when men, still weak and rude, require to be sustained by temporal rewards and punishments, and in those when the faithful, more fully instructed, must live only by faith, attached to the blessings of eternity, and suffering, in the hope of obtaining them, all the evils which can exercise their patience." Religion is, according to Bossuet, not unprogressive, but passes through an orderly suggestion of states, and from feebleness to strength, from infancy to maturity. The reality of progress is clearly and practically recognised by him throughout his whole work, not excepting even the portion of it devoted to tracing the course of religion. He represents religion, however, as having been always uniform, or rather always the same, the same God having been always accepted as the Author, and the same Christ as the Saviour, of the human race. The history of the Jewish people, and the history of the Christian Church, are viewed as one through their union in Jesus Christ, the former finding in Him its consummation and the latter its commencement; so that, either as expected or as possessed, He has been in all ages the hope and the consolation of His children. Bossuet's delineation of the course of religion is, in fact, mainly an exposition of Biblical history and a defence

and application of Biblical prophecy, which is regarded as the key to the interpretation of history. Its general aim is to prove that religion is of all things the oldest, the least changeable, the noblest, and that the Church over which Innocent XI. presided was the heir of all the ages, the guardian and possessor of all spiritual truth; in other words, it is apologetic, and not philosophical.

So far as the second division of Bossuet's treatise is merely a plea for prophecy and miracle, for the Bible or Christianity or the Church, I do not require to pass any judgment upon it. Its main thesis, however, is historical; and I must express my conviction that Bossuet has failed to establish it, and that history is not favourable to it. Religion is found, when comprehensively and impartially studied, to have been as changeable as any other historical phenomenon. It has varied from age to age, from land to land, just as industry, art, and philosophy have done. It has a certain unity amidst all its changes as they have, but not the crude external unity which Bossuet fancied it to possess. The virtual identification of religion with Jewish and Christian monotheism rests on a narrow and unworthy conception of religion, so far excusable in Bossuet's day, yet even then seen to be false by minds otherwise inferior to his own. It is a mere illusion to regard the Church as having been more stable or less continuously in motion than the State. The Roman Catholic Church is not an institution of any extraordinary age, and was already in decay when Bossuet wrote. Its claim to be in exclusive possession of any truth is incapable of historical proof.

The Third Part of Bossuet's Discourse' treats of the rise and fall of empires—*la suite des empires.* In it, as in the entire work, the central thought is that a Divine hand trains and guides collective humanity for the religion of Christ, which is incorporated in the Church; and that all historical changes may be co-ordinated with reference to a single end, the good of the Church. "God has made use of the Assyrians and Babylonians to chastise His people; of the Persians to restore it; of Alexander and his immediate successors to protect it; of Antiochus the Great and his successors to exercise it; and of the Romans to maintain its liberty against the kings of Syria bent only on

destroying it, to avenge its rejection and crucifixion of Christ, and to secure the spread and triumph of the Christian faith." The world of nations is thus like the world of nature, a connected and orderly system ruled by the will and revealing the wisdom of the Author of the universe.

But, further, in this portion of his treatise, Bossuet indicates the special secondary causes which under the hand of Providence determined the revolutions of Scythia, Ethiopia, Egypt, Assyria, Media, Persia, Greece, and Rome. He represents the various nations as having had qualities assigned to them suitable to the missions which they were to fulfil. "And as in all affairs there is that which prepares them, which determines the undertaking of them, and which causes them to succeed, the true science of history is to observe in each period of time those secret dispositions which have prepared great changes, and the important conjunctures which have brought them to pass." It is not enough to look at remarkable events and decisive revolutions merely as they outwardly appear; it is necessary to penetrate to the inclinations, the manners, the characters of the peoples and persons that have effected them. There is no such thing as chance in history, and fortune is a word devoid of meaning. God alone rules, but He rules through second causes, through men and nations being what they are, and related as they are, unless in certain exceptional cases where He wills that His own hand should be seen in direct intervention, in immediate action. But the second causes of historical events are only superficially investigated by Bossuet. He is too content to explain conquests as brought about by God inspiring certain men and their followers with invincible courage, and causes terror to march before them; useful laws by His giving to legislators the spirit of wisdom and foresight; peace and order by His restraint of human passions; and strife and revolution by His letting these passions loose. He constantly spares himself the labour of explaining historical changes by historical agencies, and refers them instead to those eternal counsels of God with which he so confidently felt himself to be thoroughly acquainted.

There can be no difference of opinion as to the literary genius and artistic skill displayed by Bossuet in delineating

the features and tracing the succession of the great empires of the ancient world. The panorama exhibited is magnificent; the portraits drawn of the several nations are marvels of beauty and power. It is difficult to suppose that this portion of Bossuet's work will ever be deprived of its value or attractiveness by the increase of historical knowledge. As regards it he cannot, I think, be said to have had any predecessor, and he has as yet, perhaps, had no successful rival. Its chief fault hardly affects its character as a work of art, and if rather inconsistent with its author's general historical theory, is on that account all the more creditable to his human sympathies. The defect to which I refer is that his portraits of the heathen nations are more or less flattering, the nobler traits of each people being made prominent, while their baser features are left indistinct or unindicated.

On whatever subject Bossuet touches in tracing the course of empires, the singular appropriateness of his language bears witness to his careful study of the matter dealt with. Says Nisard, "Condé could not have better characterised the impetuous valour of the Persians, or the masterly tactics of the Greeks, or the rigidity of the Macedonian phalanx, or the shock of the Roman legion; he could not have painted better his own models, Alexander, Hannibal, Scipio, and Cæsar. Colbert could not have appreciated in terms more appropriate and exact, or viewed from a higher point of vantage the wise administration of the Egyptians, the practical grandeur of their arts, the economy of their public works. A statesman like Richelieu could not have penetrated more keenly into the profound policy of the Roman senate. Machiavelli could not have seen more clearly into the rivalries of Greece, even aided by the spectacle which Italy, agitated by similar rivalries, presented to him. Neither Cujas nor Pothier could have shown better the import of the Roman laws. For the understanding of general relations and for technical propriety of expression, Bossuet is unequalled in our language. This great writer is the only one whom I know, in whom one can never detect, whatever be the matter of which he treats, either any indecision or effort." [1]

[1] Hist. de la littérature française, t. iv. pp. 266, 267 (ed. 1850).

Bossuet had a profound admiration for the character and genius of the Roman people. His own nature was of a grandly Roman type, and he had entered thoroughly into the spirit of Roman institutions and of the great Roman writers. Hence the two chapters on Rome with which his work closes are not only of remarkable merit for ease and power of description, but for judicious appreciation of the causes of Roman grandeur and decline. They show that if he had not had other aims in his treatise, he might have done much for the philosophy of history; and they make us regret that he did not, as he purposed to do, compose a 'Discours' on the development of France and the successes and decline of Mohammedanism.

As we have seen, Bossuet regards all history from the religious point of view. His entire teaching concerning it is based on the thought of a Divine plan determining and pervading it; on the belief that God rules the whole course of human things for the fulfilment of His own purposes. This thought in itself, or when not unwarrantably narrowed and specialised, is just the idea of Divine Providence, and it will be rejected only by those who refuse to recognise Divine agency in the universe; this belief is just the conviction that the Lord reigneth, and that the destiny of man is being accomplished under the guidance of the Eternal, and it will be shared by all who acknowledge a purpose and plan in the structure of the evolution of the world. Those who see evidences of Supreme Will and wisdom in physical nature will not fail to see its traces also in the development of humanity. The human race has had a history. Generations after generations have come and gone like the leaves of the forest; but that history has proceeded onwards without break, without stoppage, in obedience to laws the knowledge of which we are only yet groping after. There has been progress, order, plan, from the first day of man's creation down to the present hour, yet man himself has been ignorant of it, and heedless of it. The very conception is a modern one, and is vague, inadequate, and in manifold ways positively erroneous, even in the highest minds of our time. Few have had the slightest glimpse of the order which yet embraced their every action; fewer still have sought to conform to it. From first to last, from the beginning

of human history until now, the immense majority of our race have set before them ends of their own, narrow and mean schemes merely for personal good; and yet, although it has been so, and in the midst of confusion, tumult, and war, the order, progress, plan, referred to, has been slowly and silently but surely built up. The men who have accomplished it have not meant to do so; nay, they have been as ignorant of the laws of the vast scheme which they were realising as the bees are of the mathematical principles on which they construct the cells of their honeycombs; their reason has been as blind as any brute's instinct. If, when we look up at the heavens and ponder on what science tells us of the systems of worlds above us, all proceeding in their courses with perfect regularity, we feel humbled in adoration before a present reigning God, we shall not be less impressed with a sense of the Divine agency when we observe how order and the common good are brought out of the confusion and conflict of millions of human wills which seek merely their own pleasure and interest. The denial of the Divine presence and purpose in the movements of human society is an inference from atheism, not an induction of science, and least of all a special result of the science of history. On the contrary, we may rather say with Niebuhr, that " history is, of all kinds of knowledge, the one which tends most decidedly to produce belief in Providence."

But it does not follow that because an idea is true there can be no application of it which is illegitimate. And to lay this idea of a Divine Providence, or any other theological idea, as the foundation of a philosophy of history, is an illegitimate application of it. It is to reverse the true relation of science and theology. Religious truths are inferences from scientific laws, not these laws themselves, nor the rationale of them. It is only where science ends that religious philosophy begins. The results of science serve as data to religious philosophy. Science shows that certain laws and relations hold among phenomena, and whether the phenomena be inorganic, organic, animate, mental, moral, or social, this is all which science does; it rests in the laws, the ultimate general relations of phenomena, and seeks neither by intuition nor any form of inference to transcend them. It leaves to religious philosophy to go

farther and higher if it can, to avail itself of the broadest and latest scientific generalisations, and to consecrate them, to invest them with a halo of celestial glory, by showing that the laws and relations discovered by science—the adjustments and harmonies which prevail throughout creation—are expressions of the thoughts of an Infinite Intelligence into communion with which it is permitted us in some feeble degree to enter—are revelations of the character of the Creator. These truths Bossuet has overlooked or disbelieved. He accordingly makes what is an inference from the philosophy of history its fundamental premiss. He explains by the doctrine of a Providence the very conditions from which we conclude the existence of a Providence. He does not make an independent application of induction to the facts of history, but he attempts to account for these facts by an article of his theological creed. This is an obviously unscientific process. It is to make what ought to be the apex of an edifice its basis. It is to try to build by beginning at the top. And this radical error is the radical and generative principle of Bossuet's system.

Besides, many who believe in Providence will refuse to accept Bossuet's representation of it. His whole mode of conceiving of the Divine Being and government, will seem to them crudely and irreverently anthropomorphic. He does not, indeed, ascribe to God bodily parts, but he ascribes to Him human passions, petty designs, and questionable motives. Worse than his idolising of Louis XIV. as a kind of god on earth, is his imagining God to be a kind of Louis XIV. in heaven. If it be said that he only spoke as the Hebrew prophets had taught him, the answer will be that he had no right to employ their figurative and metaphorical language to express essential reality; no right to confound the language of religious emotion with that of philosophical thought. The idea of Providence is as central in the historical theory of Vico as it is in that of Bossuet, but it is wholly different in the two theories, and that simply because Vico's idea of God was profound and reverent, Bossuet's comparatively shallow and irreverent.

Further, Bossuet not only descends from Providence to history instead of rising from history to Providence, but he attributes to Providence a single and very definite design or

thought. He represents the sole aim of Providence in history to be the establishment of the kingdom of Christ, and the kingdom of Christ he identifies with the Roman Catholic Church. Now, even if he had not thus taken a narrow and erroneous view of the Christian religion—even if he had not thus confounded it with Romanism—his reading of the riddle of Providence might be seriously questioned. There is no room, indeed, for reasonable doubt that Egypt, Assyria, Persia, Greece, and Rome, as well as Judea, contributed to prepare the way for Christ, for the reception and spread of the Gospel, for the formation and diffusion of a Christian civilisation. This is a fact which not only admits of convincing historical proof, but which has been admirably proved in many recent works: for instance, in the introductions to the Church Histories of Neander, Schaff, and Pressensé, and Döllinger's 'Court of the Gentiles.' But Bossuet, like so many before and since, was not content to abide within the safe limits of a statement of facts; or rather, while believing that he was doing so, he maintained instead, as identical with such a statement, an assertion which is in reality very different, far broader, and far more hazardous,—the assertion that the world exists only for one true and perfect religion, that the rise and spread of that religion is the single end or ultimate final cause of all history, the sole ground for the existence of any age or nation. It may be so, but what is our evidence for it? Can we really penetrate so far into the depths of the Divine counsels as to know the full purpose of God in the lives of all nations, in the events of all time? That Egypt, Assyria, Persia, Greece, and Rome were all meant to prepare the way for Christianity we may well maintain, for history proves that they did so; but that these nations, and still more that nations like India and China, so ancient, so populous, so remarkable and peculiar in civilisation, and on which the beams of the Gospel shine so feebly even at the present hour, have existed solely or mainly for Christianity, is an entirely different proposition, and one which we may reasonably question. And while it may be disputed whether the final end of Providence is what even in this general form it is said to be, when the general form is withdrawn for a special, and the Roman Catholic Church is regarded as equiva-

lent to the Christian religion, room even for doubt ceases, and the questionable gives place to the certainly false. Whether history can or cannot prove that humanity exists for Christianity may be a theme for controversy; but nothing in history is surer than that it does not exist for the Church. For some centuries now the whole course of history has been proving *that* conclusively to all who are willing to be taught by it. The successive stages of progress accomplished during these centuries have been marked by the successive and growing deliverance of the State, of art, of literature and science, of the individual reason and conscience, and the various social activities, from the grasp and authority of the Church. Into her bosom they will never more return. She will never more, like the Church of the middle ages, have their power to yield. It has cost humanity too much to separate each one of them from her sway, and humanity has gained too much by the separation for it to allow of anything of the kind. The Church has lost dominion over all these things for ever, and her loss has been the gain of the world and the gain of religion.

The conception entertained by Bossuet of the final cause of history could not fail to render him unjust towards many nations, could not fail to make him overlook their significance in the world. This injustice has been exposed by Sismondi, Cousin, Buckle, and others, who have seen only vaguely the root-principles of it. They have remarked that he says little of Persia, less of Egypt, and nothing of India and China, and has taken no account of art, science, and industry as elements of social life, which is quite enough to show that he was far from realising the comprehensiveness and wealth of history. If he did not see in it only religion, religion was certainly the one element of which he had a clear enough apprehension to be able to trace the development. Nor could he do that otherwise than most imperfectly. For, first, the very notion of development in theology was then scarcely entertained by Protestant, and altogether alien to Catholic divines. And next, he had not, and no man in his time had, sympathy enough with the heathen religions of the world to discern the truths which were in them, their affinities to the human spirit, and their relations to the Christian faith. Classical

mythology was then only a mass of discordant and indecent absurdities; the spiritual life of the Eastern world was shrouded in darkness; and the history of Christianity itself had not yet been written with much of critical discrimination, or philosophic insight, or that imaginative sympathy which reanimates and re-embodies the past. It was thus inevitable that Bossuet's attempt to sketch the history even of religion should be defective; and it is simplest justice to him to remember that many things in that history, familiar now even to the unlearned, were then undreamt of even by scholars.

It is also to be remembered that Bossuet in attending chiefly to the religious element in history, and taking little account of other elements, was exercising a right of choice to which he was entitled. Some of his critics have judged his 'Discours' as if he had undertaken to treat history only as a philosopher, as if he had engaged to write a systematic treatise on the science of history. In that case we should have been warranted to demand that every historical element should be enumerated and estimated at its proper value. But Bossuet made no such profession, entered into no such engagement. He sought primarily not the advancement of science, but practical utility, Christian edification; and in order to secure this, it was as integral a part of his plan to show the perpetuity and enforce the claims of Christianity as to trace the rise and fall of empires. It is consequently unfair to judge him as if he had professed to be only either an historical philosopher or a philosophical historian.

When speaking of justice in connection with the criticism of Bossuet's 'Discourse,' it is impossible for me to refrain from saying that Mr Buckle's criticism of it appears to me indefensible. It is true that Bossuet has sacrificed other nations to the Jews; but serious as that error is, it is not more fatal to a truthful estimate of universal history, does not show greater inability to rise to a philosophical view of history, than to see in them only, as Mr Buckle does, " an obstinate and ignorant race, which owed to other peoples any scanty knowledge they ever attained." Bossuet's error lay not so much in exaggerating the importance of the Jewish nation in history, as in overlooking the importance of other nations. Even if, rejecting miracle and special revelation, we consent to regard everything in its history, legislation,

literature, and religion as merely natural, the Jewish nation will still appear to the intelligent and unbiassed student as the most remarkable in oriental antiquity. Only an eye incapable of distinguishing between outer appearance and inner reality, between material and spiritual greatness, will rank it as lower than even Egypt, Assyria, China, or India. Certainly none of these kingdoms has had a tithe of its influence on the civilisation of Europe. The legislation of Rome, it must be admitted, has affected that of modern states more powerfully than even that of Judea, but the legislation of Rome alone. It would be difficult to decide whether the political spirit of classical or of Jewish antiquity has worked most influentially in Christendom. As mere literature, the Old Testament is one of the wonders of the world, and, in particular, there is nothing in Greece or Rome, nothing in all the East or West, like its sacred poetry. There was a sense of moral claims and moral wants developed in Israel from very early times such as existed nowhere else before the diffusion of Christianity, which avowedly based itself on Judaism. As a religion, many will refuse to regard it as a supernatural revelation; but they must surely admit that we are entitled to adapt to it the language in which Aristotle speaks of Anaxagoras, "that the man who first announced that Reason was the cause of the world and of all orderly arrangement in nature, no less than in living bodies, appeared like a man in his sober senses in comparison with those who heretofore had been speaking at random and in the dark;" and to say that the nation which had a pure and elevating moral and monotheistic creed for many centuries before any other had risen above a degrading and fantastic idolatry, pantheism, or polytheism, appears among them as a sober and sane man, awake and in the daylight, in comparison with those who are dreaming, or drunk, or stumbling in the dark. In Judaism both Christianity and Mohammedanism have their roots.

The way in which Bossuet treated Mohammedanism is severely censured by Mr Buckle. He says (vol. i. pp. 725, 726, first ed.), "Every one acquainted with the progress of civilisation will allow that no small share of it is due to those gleams of light which, in the midst of surrounding darkness, shot from the great centres of Cordova and Bagdad. These, however, were the work of

Mohammedanism; and as Bossuet had been taught that Mohammedanism is a pestilential heresy, he could not bring himself to believe that Christian nations had derived anything from so corrupt a source. The consequence is that he says nothing of that great religion, the noise of which has filled the world; and having occasion to mention its founder, he treats him with scorn, as an impudent impostor, whose pretensions it is hardly fitting to notice. The great apostle, who diffused among millions of idolaters the sublime verity of one God, is spoken of by Bossuet with supreme contempt; because Bossuet, with the true spirit of his profession, could see nothing to admire in those whose opinions differed from his own. But when he has occasion to mention some obscure member of that class to which he himself belonged, then it is that he scatters his praises with boundless profusion. In his scheme of universal history, Mohammed is not worthy to play a part. He is passed by; but the truly great man, the man to whom the human race is really indebted is—Martin, Bishop of Tours. He it is, says Bossuet, whose unrivalled actions filled the universe with his fame, both during his lifetime and after his death. It is true that not one educated man in fifty has ever heard the name of Martin, Bishop of Tours. But Martin performed miracles, and the Church had made him a saint; his claims, therefore, to the attention of historians, must be far superior to the claims of one who, like Mohammed, was without these advantages. Thus it is that, in the opinion of the only eminent writer on history during the power of Louis XIV., the greatest man Asia has ever produced, and one of the greatest the world has ever seen, is considered in every way inferior to a mean and ignorant monk, whose most important achievement was the erection of a monastery, and who spent the best part of his life in useless solitude, trembling before the superstitious fancies of his weak and ignoble nature."

In order to enable the reader to estimate this criticism at its worth, it is not necessary that I should show that although the Mohammedan was a powerful and in many respects admirable movement, it yet involved no great original idea, the religious truth which it contained and diffused being drawn from Jewish, and the scientific truth from Greek sources; that even if Bossuet had tried and failed to appreciate that movement, his

failure ought to be ascribed more to the spirit of his age than to the spirit of his profession; that the meaning of the language actually employed by him is misrepresented and caricatured; or that wrong is done to the memory of Martin of Tours, whose youth and manhood were spent not in useless solitude but in the Roman camp, who, although sharing in the superstitions of his contemporaries, certainly carried into his later life of monk and bishop no weakness or ignobleness of nature, but a heroic courage which enabled him to face death often in his struggle with Celtic and Latin paganism, and a Christian dignity conspicuously displayed before an emperor surrounded with episcopal adulations, and who is known not only as the founder of a monastery but as the advocate of religious toleration, as a man who protested by word and deed against the intervention of secular power in religious matters, and branded with his solemn reprobation the bishops who took part in the persecution of the heretic Priscillian and his disciples. It is not necessary for me to prove any of these facts, which it would be easy to do, as there are two still more conclusive as to the rashness and unfairness of Mr Buckle's accusation—viz., first, that all that Bossuet has written in his 'Discours' about Martin of Tours is *just the two lines which Mr Buckle quotes;* and next, that at the end of that discourse he informs us he meant to write *another* in order to explain the history of France *and the rise and decline of Mohammedanism,*—"Ce même discours vous découvrira les causes des prodigieux succès de Mahomet et de ses successeurs: cet empire, qui a commencé deux cents ans avant Charlemange, pouvait trouver sa place dans ce discours; mais j'ai cru qu'il valait mieux vous faire voir dans une même suite ses commencements et sa décadence." It would almost seem as if it might be as difficult for a nineteenth-century positivist to be completely just to a seventeenth-century Catholic bishop, as for the latter to appreciate truthfully the great qualities of an Arabian "faux prophète."[1]

[1] Mr Huth, in his 'Life and Writings of Henry Thomas Buckle,' vol. i. pp. 237-239, has replied to my criticism of Buckle's censure of Bossuet. He begins with the words: "I have hardly found in Professor Flint's 'Philosophy of History,' or in his account in the 'Encyclopædia Britannica,' a single word in Buckle's praise; and not only does he practically adopt many of Buckle's views without a reference to him (*e.g.*, Phil. of Hist., pp. 7, 27, 94, 101, 104, 128, 129),

but actually goes out of his way to accuse him of unfairness and dishonesty in his account of Bossuet. Mr Flint's accusation is this: that it is untrue that Bossuet neglected the Mohammedans, or overrated Martin of Tours; and he maintains that the Jewish nation is the most remarkable in antiquity." I am glad to have the opportunity thus afforded me of stating that Mr Huth's excellent biography gave me a much higher opinion of Mr Buckle as a man than I entertained before I became acquainted with it. I had been led in a way which it is unnecessary to state to form an estimate of the character of Mr Buckle which Mr Huth's book at once convinced me must be erroneous. Hence, although I am not aware of having written any word which is unjust towards Mr Buckle, I can readily suppose that I might well have found more to say in his praise than I have done. On the other hand, I cannot see any ground for my referring to Mr Buckle in any of the pages which Mr Huth has indicated. There is no view in these pages, so far as I am aware, peculiar to Buckle, or specially derived from Buckle. Then, if testing the accuracy of Buckle's criticism of Bossuet's historical philosophy was *going out of my way* when that philosophy was precisely the subject which I had under consideration, I confess I do not know what *keeping in my way* would have been. Mr Huth should have seen that I had not accused Mr Buckle of "dishonesty in his account of Bossuet," or of any other kind of unfairness than that which Buckle himself charges on Bossuet. Further, my accusation was not "that it is untrue that Bossuet neglected the Mohammedans, or overestimated Martin of Tours." As to the Mohammedans, it was, that Buckle ought to have taken due account of Bossuet's declared intention to treat specially of the progress and decay of Mohammedanism. That showed that Bossuet was quite aware that Mohammed was a much more important historical personage than Martin of Tours. "But," says Mr Huth, "I doubt that even if he had written the continuation he proposed, from the time of Charlemagne to Louis XIV., which 'vous découvrira les causes des prodigieux succès de Mahomet et de ses successeurs,' he would have done more than give some account of the Crusades." Indeed! Would *that* have been fulfilling his promise? Would *that* have been disclosing *the causes* of the marvellous successes of Mohammed and his successors? As to Martin of Tours, what I charge on Buckle is that he underestimated him as much as he believed Bossuet to have overestimated him. As I suppose that Bossuet credited Martin with having performed some at least of the miracles ascribed to him, I suppose also that he overestimated him, my own capacity of believing in miracles being small. But what he says of his fame is not so very exaggerated. What Mr Buckle says, that "not one educated man in fifty has ever heard the name of Martin, Bishop of Tours," may be true of the present age, but in the latter part of the fourth century, and for ages afterwards, all Western Christendom knew it well. So far as popular fame was concerned, probably no pope, bishop, or saint of those times equalled him. Dilating on this point, Martin's friend and biographer, Sulpicius Severus, uses words which I imagine Bossuet must have had in mind when he wrote the words on which Buckle has so severely commented: "Hoc Ægyptus fatetur, hoc Syria, hoc Æthiops comperit, hoc Indus audivit, hoc Parthus et Persa noverunt: nec ignorat Armenia. Bosporus enclusa cognovit et postremo si quis aut Fortunatas Insulas, aut Glacialem frequentat Oceanum" (De Virtutibus Monachorum Orientalium, l. xix.) I agree with Mr Huth in thinking that the position and influence of the Jewish nation in history is too large a subject to be discussed in a note.

CHAPTER III.

THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY: GENERAL SURVEY—MONTESQUIEU, TURGOT, AND VOLTAIRE.

I.[1]

The age of Louis XIV. occupies in the history of France a place analogous to that of the age of Pericles in the history of Greece, and of Augustus in the history of Rome. France was then indubitably the first nation of Europe; the *Grand Monarque* was the most powerful king on earth; and the Court of Versailles was the most brilliant in the world. A Colbert strove to develop the internal resources of the kingdom; a Louvois, served by masterly diplomatists, directed its external policy; and a Condé, a Turenne, a Luxembourg, a Catinat, a Vendome, led her armies to victory. The French language attained its utmost refinement; and French literature acquired a perfection of form which rendered it, especially in the departments of oratory and the drama, an object of admiration and of envy to all the nations of Europe. The arts of painting, engraving, and architecture flourished. In spite of the most serious impediments, even industry progressed and commerce expanded.

[1] For the general history of France in the eighteenth century the reader may be referred to Michelet's 'Hist. de France,' tom. xv.-xvii.; Martin's 'Hist. de France,' tom. xv. xvi.; Blanc's 'Hist. de la Rév. Franç.,' tom. i. ii.; and M. Taine's 'Les Origines de la France contemporaine.' The chief work on the history of French philosophy during the eighteenth century is Damiron's 'Mémoires pour servir à l'Histoire de la Philosophie au xviiie siècle.' The two histories of general literature for the same period which have, perhaps, the highest reputation, are Hettner's 'Litteraturgeschichte des 18. Jahrhunderts,' 2° Theil, and Nisard's 'Hist. de la Littérature Française,' t. iv. But, of course, there are whole libraries of books, good, bad, and indifferent, on the philosophy, literature, and history of the eighteenth century.

Religion and its ministers were treated with universal and almost unlimited deference. Looked at partially and superficially, it might well seem that the policy of Richelieu, of Mazarin, and of Louis XIV. had amply justified itself, and that absolutism was a glorious success.

But there is another side to the picture; and one which shows us that if the policy initiated by Richelieu may be credited with leading to the triumphs of the age of Louis XIV., it must equally be held to have contributed to bring about the disasters of the Revolution. The omnipotence of the monarch rested on the powerlessness of his subjects; the splendour of the Court was due to the impoverishment of the nation. The cultivators of the soil were loaded with burdens to support non-resident proprietors, and to pay for costly palaces, extravagant pensions, needless and destructive wars. The nobles, deprived of their independence, but allowed to retain unjust and offensive privileges, acquired frivolous and corrupt habits. The ordinary priests were as poor as the peasants, and without hope of preferment, while the higher offices of the Church were filled by noblemen and courtiers, too often worldly and immoral in their lives. The king ruled as the absolute master of the nation, and used its resources according to the pleasure of his will. All local liberties were withdrawn; the local organs of self-government were superseded by the administration of agents of the Crown. The provinces languished, and the capital was stimulated into unhealthy activity.

The system of absolutism reached its full development under Louis XIV., and the natural effects of it came ever more clearly to light as his reign was prolonged. Long before his death the demonstration of its viciousness as a species of government, and of its incompatibility with the healthy growth of a nation, was complete. Continuous foreign wars ended in exhaustion and disgrace. Ceremonial display and outward magnificence merely veiled moral meanness and inward depravity. Punctilious attention to the rites of the Church, and a blind or feigned zeal for orthodoxy, only favoured the spread of hypocrisy and of a secret and cynical scepticism. The unnatural and arbitrary compression practised by the Government was sorely felt by all classes of society. The misery of

the great mass of the people foreboded a terrible reckoning. When the old king died in 1715, a general sense of relief was felt throughout France, and even in some places a joy which expressed itself, as Saint-Simon says, " with a scandalous *éclat*."

But the monarchy itself was unshaken; its principles had not even been assailed. The temper of the French people was still the reverse of revolutionary or disloyal. Religious incredulity was almost confined to the younger generation of courtiers, and a small class of Parisians. If Louis XIV. had been succeeded by reforming rulers of ability, courage, and virtue, there might well have been no French Revolution, to the great advantage both of France and of humanity. But with such successors as he actually had, the wonder is that a revolution did not occur sooner.

Louis XV., the great-grandson of Louis XIV., was in 1715 only five years of age. From 1715 to 1723, the Duke of Orleans was as regent the head of the Government. He began by making some urgently needed reforms, but soon disappointed any hopes he had thus raised. He made a fatal mistake when he sided with the hierarchy in favouring the usurpations of the Papacy on the rights of conscience and the independence of the nation. His life was one of open and shameless profligacy. The Duke of Bourbon, who was minister from 1723 to 1726, followed in the same path; and as he added to vice ignorance and stupidity, he made himself even more despised. Then Fleury succeeded to power, and it lasted until his death in 1743, when he was ninety-three years of age. He was not devoid of personal virtues, and had intellect enough to govern the king; but he was mean, unamiable, bigoted, and without sympathy with the aspirations, or comprehension of the wants, of the nation. He so ruled as most effectively to promote the cause of scepticism and of hatred of the Church.

With the death of Cardinal Fleury the personal government of Louis XV. began, and it lasted until 1774. There have been few more hateful and shameful Governments in all history. The Court sank into ever lower depths of infamy. The country was ruined with taxes. The clergy and the parliaments were engaged in keen strife; both contested the royal authority. All was corruption and intrigue, anarchy and contention. The

reign ended amidst universal execration. The ancient monarchy was also near its end. It was still vigorous in 1715; it was decayed to the core in 1774.

What had been the general course of opinion in France during the period to which I have been referring? It was at first submissive and deferential both to ecclesiastical and civil authority. There was in it no thought of resistance to either. Absolute power, it was hoped, would cure the evils which it had caused. This feeling, as well as the discontent with which it was associated, found their earliest and clearest expression in the political romances or utopias which were written in France during the latter part of the seventeenth and the earlier part of the eighteenth century. The 'République des Sévérrambes' of Vairasse, the 'Testament' of Mezlier, the 'Voyage en Salente' in the 'Télémaque of Fénélon, and the 'Voyages de Cyrus' of Ramsay, are examples. These works were very significant. Hope springing immortal in the human breast, a suffering people is naturally prophetic. It is in their times of sorest depression that nations usually indulge most in dreams of a better future, and that their imaginations produce most freely social ideals and utopias. But all the ideals or utopias which appeared in France at this period had a common character. They were only so many forms of the prophecy of a perfect commonwealth centring in, and depending on, a perfectly wise and irresistibly powerful paternal ruler.

The State came at first into direct and open conflict with public opinion during the regency, owing to the part it took in the conflict occasioned by the publication of the bull Unigenitus. This conflict had the most serious consequences. By it the French Church was divided into two parties, the tranquillity of the kingdom disturbed, violent disputes raised between the clergy and the parliaments, and the latter, conscious of the approval of the majority of the nation, led to set at defiance the royal ordinances commanding submission to the Papal decisions. At an early stage in the course of it the ecclesiastical authorities had become thoroughly discredited in popular estimation; and gradually the feelings of contempt and aversion with which the Church and its ministers were regarded extended to Christianity and its doctrines. "Free-

thinking" passed from England into France, there to find a still more congenial soil and a more luxuriant development.

The State was soon assailed, however, on other grounds than its action in relation to the Church. Exemplifying all vices, and committing all varieties of folly and crime, it provoked attack at every point. Its weakness and its arbitrariness, its carelessness and its selfishness, its financial prodigality, the want of dignity, decency, or shame which characterised its Court, the incompetence and injustice shown in every department of its internal administration, and the want of patriotism manifest in its dealings with foreign Powers, all naturally drew down on it criticism and censure. Without ceasing to be a tyranny, it ceased to be feared; retaining all the apparatus and methods of despotism, it became irresolute and uncertain in the application of them. And while it was rapidly growing weaker and more timid, the popular mind was rapidly growing stronger and more daring; while the extant institutions were rapidly crumbling, ideas hitherto latent were vigorously forcing themselves into power; while old methods were falling into discredit, new principles were rising into honour. Before the century was far advanced the Government stood face to face with a hostile authority which former ages had scarcely known, and with which it was most difficult to cope. This was that public opinion, the advent of which was, perhaps, the most distinctive and important fact in the history of France in the eighteenth century. There had not been previously in France a public opinion strictly so called. Before the reign of Louis XIV. there had been only the passions and interests of factions and classes; under his reign there had been an opinion dominated by the influence of the monarch; but in the eighteenth century a public opinion which was truly the reflection and expression of the general mind working freely became the most potent factor in the national life, the chief source of reputation and success, or of disgrace and failure. It disturbed the judgment, arrested the will, unnerved the arm of the ruler; made the *salon* and the *café* the rivals of the Court; rendered every speaker or writer formidable, and the collective influence of the intelligent and literary portion of society enormous. Its rewards were more to be desired and its punishments more to be feared than

those which either sovereign or pope could confer. Under Louis XIV. the displeasure of the king involved ruin; under Louis XV., to criticise and ridicule the constituted authorities with dexterity and effect was the shortest and easiest route to fame.[1]

Out of this public opinion arose the French philosophy or philosophism of the eighteenth century. Hence the secret of its rapid spread, its amazing force, its prodigious results. It was no mere importation from England, or even essentially English. If it had, it would have been comparatively feeble and sterile. Its matrix and medium, its roots and life, were French, although it found in the precepts of Bacon, the physics of Newton, the empiricism of Locke, the free-thinking of the Deists, and the political tenets of the Whigs, a nutriment which the Cartesianism so long dominant in France could not supply to it. Cartesianism, being out of accord with the general state of sentiment and the prevailing spirit of the time which had now arrived, naturally decayed and disappeared; and the new mode of thought rapidly took its place. Probably the connection between philosophy and public opinion was never closer than in France during the eighteenth century. In fact, what was then and there called philosophy was, for the most part, just public opinion in its clearest form. Philosophy stooped so much to public opinion as almost to cease to be philosophy, but with the result that public opinion went wholly over to its side, and the public believed itself to have become philosophical. It has to be observed, however, that it was not until nearly the middle of the eighteenth century that what is designated the French philosophy of the eighteenth century became a power in France. It is altogether erroneous to suppose that the French philosophers produced the spirit which caused the French Revolution; they were, in the main, its products. But certainly they did a vast deal to direct and diffuse it; for they were numerous, talented, passionately in earnest, and indefatigable in the work of propagandism.

[1] See on this subject Aubertin's 'L'Esprit public au dix-huitième siècle,' and Roquain's 'L'Esprit révolutionnaire avant la Révolution.' The latter work is especially important for the understanding of the mental development of France during the period from 1715 to 1789, and for the explanation of the Revolution.

I must briefly indicate the characteristics of the French philosophy of the eighteenth century, in so far as they throw light on the progress of French historiography or affected the nature and favoured the diffusion of French historical philosophy in that age.

It was a much more radical, aggressive, and revolutionary philosophy than the species of English philosophy to which it was most allied, and of which it was in a sense the development. It was, in particular, more decided and sweeping in its rejection of authority, recognising none save that of reason, and exempting nothing from the criticism of reason. Ancient tradition, common consent, faith of the Church, Scripture, were held to be worthless except in so far as conformed to, and vouched for, by reason. Specifically Christian doctrines were treated by all the adherents of the new philosophy as absurd and pernicious superstitions; and although the principles of theism were accepted by a class of them as rationally warranted, a class not less numerous assailed all religious beliefs as delusions. The new philosophy was eminently rationalistic. It was not, however, calmly and temperately, but keenly and passionately, so. Few of its representatives displayed moderation in their discussions, or contended in the cause of reason only with fair reasoning; the majority of them had large recourse to ridicule, invective, and misrepresentation, and thereby produced an incalculable amount of mischief, for which they cannot be held to have been irresponsible, although they may not have foreseen it.

The philosophy in question was empirical as well as rationalistic, and largely also materialistic. Starting from the position of Locke, that all knowledge is derived from experience, it traced experience wholly to external sense, and explained all mental states and processes as combinations and modifications of sensation. It despised and rejected metaphysics. It honoured physical science, and interested itself zealously in its diffusion. Its eyes were not turned intently inwards or upwards, but they were keenly observant of surrounding physical and social phenomena. In France during the eighteenth century remarkable progress was made in mathematics, astronomy, physics, chemistry, natural history, geography, and medicine;

and the causes of their progress were to a considerable extent the same to which were due the prevalence of the philosophy of the epoch. The rise of modern atheistic materialism dates from this period, and from its first appearance gained ready acceptance. It is true that a systematic and entirely unreserved exposition of the system was not published until 1770; and even then it created a sensation, and drew forth from Voltaire a cry of alarm and from Frederick the Great a refutation; but there were many who found in Holbach's conclusions only their own opinions, and firmly believed that science showed there could be no God, soul, freedom, or immortality.

The philosophy under consideration was, further, one eager for action, bent on proselytism and conquest, ambitious to reform and govern society. Unlike Cartesianism, it was militant and aggressive, ethically, politically, and religiously. It aimed not only at displacing, but replacing, the powers which had hitherto ruled the world. It intervened in everything, anxious to make all things new, and with little distrust of its own ability to do so. The common representation of it as a merely negative philosophy is quite inadequate. It was negative, much too negative; but it was also essentially positive, honourably and nobly positive. Its chief strength was drawn from its positive ethical and political convictions; from its faith in justice, toleration, liberty, fraternity, the sovereignty of the people, the rights of man. Its perception of the meaning of these principles was not always perfect; its application of them was often most imperfect; but it believed in them with a sincerity and intensity unknown for centuries, if not from the beginning of historic time. It so believed in them as the prerogatives of all men, irrespective of religion, or country, or condition.

Former generations had received these principles very coldly and partially, and only in so far as they seemed to be contained and sanctioned by Christianity; now they were accepted enthusiastically and fully, as anterior to and higher than Christianity, as laws by reference to which all religions and professed revelations, all institutions and authorities, must be judged. The adherents even of doctrines which appear to tend directly and inevitably to denial of morality and to contempt for man—

the atheists, materialists, and sensationalists of philosophism—zealously advocated certain grand ethical and political truths, which the ecclesiastical writers and orators of the seventeenth century had ignored or assailed; and they at least taught men to think not less highly of themselves than they ought to think. The same authors who are notorious for the crudeness and vehemence with which they rejected belief in God and the soul, denied the absoluteness of moral distinctions, scoffed at hopes of a spiritual and future life, and represented man as a merely material organisation, produced and determined by a blind necessity, primarily endowed only with sensuous impressibility, and destined soon to lose for ever the consciousness which he has for a time enjoyed,—are also found, with a remarkable although not inexplicable inconsequentiality, dilating on the unworthiness of existing ambitions and interests; pouring contempt on mundane glory; defying the powers and ridiculing the idols of the world; summoning men to sincerity, naturalness, justice, and beneficence; and demanding for the humblest of the human race the recognition of his dignity, the security of his person, the inviolability of his conscience, and the freedom of his thought. In many ways the French philosophers of the eighteenth century grievously erred, but they are fully entitled to the credit of having been signally successful propagators of truths of the utmost practical moment.

Another characteristic of these philosophers was their keen interest in the study of history. They distrusted speculation and abstraction, but had great confidence in experience and induction; they were indifferent or averse to the theories of metaphysics and the dogmas of theology, but keenly desirous of knowing the laws and particulars of nature. Hence they turned eagerly for entertainment and instruction to the pages of travellers, physicists, delineators of human character, passions, and manners, and historians. History had strong attractions for them. They fully shared in the conviction generally diffused among their contemporaries, that "the proper study of mankind is man." It was history which seemed to them to enlarge most the limits, and increase most the contents, of experience. It was history which ministered most directly and abundantly to the satisfaction of the feeling of humanity,

that sympathy of man with his fellow-men simply as such, the prevalence of which so strikingly distinguishes the eighteenth century from the theological and scholastic ages. It was history likewise which supplied the philosophers with evidences of the misrule of the powers which they combated; which showed them how the peoples had been deluded, wronged, and oppressed; and which furnished them with the most effective arguments for the tenets which they were most anxious to propagate. They therefore betook themselves eagerly to the study of history. Into its study, however, they carried their passions and prejudices. Few of them examined it in a strictly historical or truly scientific spirit. Where they should have been content to narrate or explain it, they often strove chiefly to make it subservient to their polemical and proselytising zeal, and, in consequence, frequently misrepresented and misinterpreted it. They regarded the past as so given over to tyranny and superstition, so overestimated their own enlightenment, and were so credulously hopeful as to the future, that their conceptions of the plan of history were necessarily narrow, unjust, and inconsistent. Their unbelief as to the eternal and invisible, and their hostility to religion, rendered them insensible to the agency of the ultimate cause of the movement of history, and satisfied with superficial explanations. Yet although their interest in history was generally far from pure, and their treatment of it far from always appropriate, there can be no doubt that, on the whole, they greatly furthered the progress of historical science. Previously only a very few exceptional and isolated thinkers had attempted to discover law and meaning in history; now it became the favourite subject of theorising. Almost all the chief intellects of the age were attracted to it, with the result that in less than half a century far more historico-philosophical writings appeared than in all previous time.

I shall proceed to a consideration of the most important of these, as soon as I have indicated what was the general condition of French historiography in the eighteenth century.

The view has often been expressed that historical literature was at a low ebb in France in the eighteenth century, or at least that it was greatly below the point at which it had stood in the previous century. This is a view which it will be found

difficult or impossible to prove. The study of Greek, the most useful and necessary of languages to the historian of ancient times and peoples, was, indeed, less generally and carefully cultivated than it had formerly been, although strangely enough it was just the period when Greek ideas had most influence, and when the great ambition of earnest Frenchmen was to resemble the sages of Athens or the heroes of Sparta. Nor is it to be denied that many of the popular French historians of the eighteenth century were very deficient in knowledge and research. But we have no right to contrast such authors with the erudite French historical scholars of the seventeenth century, and to ignore the fact that there were in France during the eighteenth century also many most laborious and most learned workers in almost every department of history. The Benedictine Order still supplied erudite historical investigators of the most indefatigable and exemplary type. Montfaucon, Martene, Denis of Saint-Marthe, Bouquet, and their associates, performed as students of history services of the highest value. They had worthy rivals among the members of the Academy of Inscriptions in such men as D'Anville, Breguigny, Fréret, La Curne de Saint-Palaye, and others, perhaps, not less entitled to be mentioned.

Montfaucon in his 'Palæographia Græca' (1708) made an original and important departure in the field of classical research, and in 'L'Antiquité expliquée et représentée en figures' (10 vols., 1719-1724) he gave to the world a still more epoch-making work, which showed not only the abounding interest of the history of ancient art in itself, but to how great an extent the remains of such art throw light on all the developments of ancient history. The former of these publications is a worthy counterpart and admirable complement to the 'Diplomatica' of Mabillon; the latter is an almost inexhaustible treasury of valuable materials, from which a host of scholars have drawn instruction,—a vast and noble monument of its author's extraordinary knowledge, of his singular clearness of design and arrangement, and of his untiring and methodical and wisely directed industry. Dom Bouquet in his 'Recueil des historiens des Gaules et de la France' (8 vols., 1738-1754), and Dom Rivet by his 'Histoire littéraire de la France' (1733), laid the

foundations on which the histories of the French people and of French literature could alone be satisfactorily built up. I must refrain from referring to the services rendered to the study of oriental history by Fourmont and his disciples, of ecclesiastical history by Martene and Durand, of secular medieval history by La Curne, and of the sources of French history by Breguigny, or to the labours of sundry meritorious local and special historians, and of those who distinguished themselves in geography, chronology, numismatics, and other disciplines auxiliary to history; but I cannot leave quite unnoticed the merits of Nicholas Fréret, perhaps the most remarkably endowed of all the French scholars of the century with the genius of historical criticism and research.

He was born in 1688 and died in 1749. His life was entirely that of a student. His writings first appeared in the form of contributions to the Academy of Inscriptions, of which learned society he was for a considerable time secretary. The collected edition of them—'Œuvres complètes de Fréret' (20 tom. 12mo) —was published in 1798, prefaced by the excellent 'Éloge de Fréret' of M. de Bougainville, a scholar of kindred spirit, brother of the celebrated navigator De Bougainville. Fréret seems to have taken the knowledge of all antiquity for his province, and his investigations extend into all parts of this vast domain. He everywhere displays the most thorough and varied erudition, great ingenuity in research and independence of judgment, and a comprehensive, vigorous, and philosophical intelligence. The results of his investigations were only published in detached and fragmentary communications; but the identity of the method always pursued takes from them all appearance of inconsistency or heterogeneousness. The method is just that of the severe and scientific criticism of the present day, already in Fréret's hands as clear, self-conscious, and unhesitating in regard to means, processes, and end, as in those of the foremost living historians. His criticism is of a kind which had entirely thrown off the fetters of traditionalism and yet kept itself free from the excesses of historical Pyrrhonism; it is also strictly impartial and disinterested, seeking only to ascertain the truth. I shall briefly indicate the range and scope of his scientific activity.

He gave a great amount of attention to the study of the chronology of the ancient world; and the results of his researches in this department are embodied in eight volumes of his collected writings (vii.-xiv.) He worked with a full knowledge of the labours of Scaliger, Petau, Masham, and Newton, but also with the conviction that their methods had been neither sufficiently exact nor sufficiently comprehensive. There can be little doubt that he detected not a few errors into which they had fallen, and that his criticisms of their processes and conclusions were of the most relevant, objective, and useful kind. It is admitted by competent specialists that his dissertations on the general questions of which chronology treats are admirable from a methodological point of view; that the special dissertations on the chronology of the Assyrians, Chaldeans, Lydians, Egyptians, Hindus, Hebrews, Greeks, and Romans, were important contributions to the histories of these peoples; that his reduction of Chinese chronology to approximately true dimensions was a brilliant as well as solid achievement; and that his investigations as to the time when Pythagoras lived, and as to the dates of the battles of Marathon and of Platea, of the taking of Athens by Sylla, of the death of Herod the Great, &c., deserve careful consideration. The 'Observations on the Two Deluges or Inundations of Ogyges and Deucalion,' and the 'Reflections on an ancient celestial Phenomenon observed in the time of Ogyges' (see tom. xvi. of the 'Œuvres'), are good specimens of his ingenuity and skill in combining scattered data, and educing from them a significant result. He likewise applied himself with ardour to the study of ancient geography, collecting, sifting, comparing, and combining an enormous number of data of all kinds bearing on the points discussed, and leaving among his manuscripts no fewer than 1375 maps embodying the results of his inquiries regarding the geography of Gaul, of Greece and the islands of the Archipelago, of Asia Minor, of Persia, and of Armenia. In this department he dealt not merely with particular points and problems, but also with general questions, the method of investigation, the growth of geographical knowledge among the ancients, the separation of truth from error in their geographical notions and statements, the various measures in use among

the peoples of antiquity, &c. His fame as a geographer, like that of his friend Delisle, has been too much eclipsed by D'Anville's, whose boast of having "found a geography made of bricks, and left one of gold," considerably overshot the mark. Fréret engaged likewise in inquiries into the rise and progress of the arts and sciences, a branch of history which only began to flourish in the eighteenth century. His 'General Observations on the study of Ancient Philosophy' (tom. xvi.) deserve to be specially noted in this connection, owing to the clearness with which they show that the traces of positive scientific knowledge may be discovered among the debris of early cosmogonical and speculative systems. He at least pointed out and entered on the path which Tannery, Natorp, and others are in the present day attempting to follow up. The history of religion was also the subject of his earnest and prolonged inquiries (tom. xvii.-xviii.) His views on Greek mythology were far in advance of those prevalent in the eighteenth century. He saw clearly that it was a system of a very composite character, formed of numerous and heterogeneous elements derived from diverse sources, and that it could not be explained by any single principle or hypothesis, such as the euhemeristic, the corruption of a primitive revelation, allegorising, the personification of physical phenomena or metaphysical ideas, &c. He was among the first to obtain a fairly distinct and truthful view of the stages through which mythology had passed in Greece before there were any historians to record them; and this was because he was among the first to follow exclusively and consistently that comparative method which can alone enable us to discover in mythology its own history, and in the fables of the gods the fates of their worship and worshippers. He was, however, so aware of the difficulties and dangers of investigation in this sphere that he confined himself to research into particular points regarding which the truth seemed not unattainable. Judged of with reference to the requirements of method, his special inquiries contrast most favourably with those of Banier, Gosselin, and other mythologists of the eighteenth century. When they fail to lead to a satisfactory result, the cause is not that they have been unskilfully or unscientifically conducted, but that essential

data were wanting, and could only be found in the Vedas and Avesta. The development of language was another subject which Fréret studied in a thoroughly philosophical spirit. He had a general knowledge of many languages and a thorough acquaintance with several. He sought to classify them naturally, and to distribute them according to their affiliation into families. He exposed the prevailing practices of haphazard etymological conjecturing, and insisted that etymological processes should be tested by historical criticism. He made a serious study of Chinese, and is admitted to have been the first to demonstrate the true nature of the Chinese written language and of Chinese versification. There remain to be mentioned his dissertations on the origins and comminglings of ancient nations, on the history of the earliest inhabitants of Greece, on the different primitive peoples of Italy, on the populations of Northern Europe, on the prodigies reported by ancient writers, and on the study of ancient histories and the degrees of certitude in their proofs. He had, moreover, closely studied the sources of French history; and in 1714 he read before the Academy, of which he was to be afterwards so active a member, an essay on 'The Origin of the Franks,' sufficient to make it apparent that the royal historiographer, Father Daniel, was by no means so truly critical as he got the credit of being. It was a purely academic piece of work, but on account of it Fréret was thrown for a short time into the Bastille. The consequence was that his first contribution to French history was also his last.

The two general histories of France which attained the highest place in popular estimation during the period under consideration were those of Father Gabriel Daniel and of Paul Francis Velly. The former was published in three volumes in 1713; the latter was begun in 1755, and after the death of the author in 1759, by which time eight volumes had been written, it was continued by various hands. Neither Daniel nor Velly, however, showed remarkable historical talent. It is doubtless true that Daniel surpassed his predecessor Mezeray in accuracy, and made some meritorious special investigations; but he was really inferior to Mezeray on the whole. He distinguished very imperfectly between the essential and the incidental or even superfluous, between the important and the trivial; he failed

to follow the good example which Mezeray had set in trying to write a history of the French people, and not merely of their rulers; and he indulged far too largely in religious polemics of an unenlightened and intolerant kind. He realised the obligations of the historian in relation to the study and criticism of sources much better than Mezeray, against whom he wrote a special work on account of his disregard of them, but he fulfilled them only a little better himself, and often entirely neglected them. Velly showed himself to be a man of more modern mind and speech. He wrote under the influence of the philosophical and political ideas prevailing in the society of his time, and sought in particular to utilise in his work the views of Montesquieu. He drew still less than Daniel from the original sources; and gave his readers no correct and distinct, not to say vivid or animated, conception of the various epochs of which he treated.

There were no French historians of the eighteenth century more widely popular than Charles Rollin and René Aubert de Vertot. There are still many elderly Frenchmen and even Englishmen who have pleasant and grateful recollections of Rollin's 'Ancient History' (1730) and 'Roman History' (1739). Their author was one of the most pious, virtuous, and amiable of men; singularly ingenuous and unselfish; filled with a sense of the divine presence and purpose in the movement of human affairs; anxious not only to instruct the minds, but to improve the lives, of his readers. The charm of his writings flowed directly from the beauty of his character. Such simple goodness as was his is of the kind which elicits affection, disarms criticism, and makes the heart its partisan. But Rollin's Histories have lost their power to please; they belong to a dead past, and the dead has buried its dead. The young men of the present day are little tolerant of *naïveté* or credulity; and probably few of those who fifty years ago read Rollin's writings with delight would care to venture on doing so again lest their old impressions should be too violently disturbed. Rollin was the last French historian of his century who wrote secular history with a view to tracing in it the all-pervading agency of Providence, the continuous manifestation of the wisdom, justice, and goodness of God.

Vertot owed his reputation to other qualities. He was richly dowered with the gifts which make an historical artist. He excelled in the distribution and arrangement of his materials, connected events in a natural manner, gave free indulgence to an easily moved sensibility, and so touched the emotions of his readers. He possessed a lively imagination, considerable power of pictorial and dramatic representation, and a remarkable mastery over the language in which he wrote. Such an author, careful as he was to select for the exercise of his talents the historical subjects best fitted to display them to advantage, —the " revolutions " of Portugal, of Sweden, of the Roman Government, &c.,—easily succeeded in gaining immense popularity. But, unfortunately, he was superficial in research and reflection, inaccurate and unreliable in his statements, apt in his desire to present facts attractively, to present them untruly. Hence his works have fallen into, perhaps, a deeper oblivion than those of Rollin.

We may fairly, I believe, rank three ecclesiastical historians —the Catholic Fleury and the Protestants Beausobre and Basnage—higher in the scale of historical merit than Daniel or Velly, Rollin or Vertot. They worked, however, in a field of more limited interest; and as their writings, although valuable, were in no respects of an original nature or epoch-making significance, it is not necessary that I should indicate their characteristics.

The book in most repute in the eighteenth century on the subject of historical methodology was Lenglet du Fresnoy's 'Méthode pour étudier l'Histoire.' The first edition of it was published in 1713; a second and much enlarged edition appeared in 1729; and it was translated into Italian, German, and English. The author was a worthy, loyal, and religious man, yet he was five times imprisoned in the Bastille. He was a very industrious but far from brilliant writer. The 'Historical Methodology' was much the most successful of his productions; it supplied, in a manner which was generally deemed to be satisfactory, a want which had come to be widely felt early in the eighteenth century. It will be searched in vain, however, for anything like a philosophical view of the course of history, or of any epoch thereof, or for any glimpses

of original insight into the nature of historical investigation or the functions of historical art; it never takes us much below the surface or away from the commonplace. Its chief merit lies in its being a survey of the whole subject of historical method; if not the first systematic Historic, at least one much more systematic than any which had previously appeared. It treats of the end or office of history; points out how geography, chronology, the knowledge of customs, &c., are preparatory for, and auxiliary to, history; and lays down precepts for the guidance of those who would so read history as intellectually and morally to profit by it to the full. There follow many pages filled with remarks on the histories of the various peoples, but showing no special knowledge of any history except that of France. The various kinds of history form the next subject of discourse. The aids to the study of them, and the sources whence they are drawn, are afterwards touched upon. The method of teaching history—the reasons for caution in dealing with it—the characteristics of good and bad historians—are discussed. Rules are laid down and enforced with a view to guide us in judging of historical facts, and to enable us to determine whether works are genuine or spurious. Finally, an attempt is made to show in what way and to what extent even false reports, spurious and doubtful works, and prejudiced historians, may be dealt with so as to yield instruction. There are appended lists of historical books classified according to their subject-matter, the countries, provinces, &c., of which they treat. These were doubtless felt to be very serviceable at the time when the work appeared.

Rollin has treated of the study of history at considerable length in the "third part" of his once famous work, 'De la manière d'enseigner et d'étudier les Belles Lettres' (1726-28). He begins by showing the vast importance of history as a means of enlarging human knowledge, which without its aid would be confined within extremely narrow limits. He represents it as the common school of mankind for religious and moral instruction and discipline,—one abounding in lessons of warning and encouragement, of correction and improvement. He lays stress on its function as a judge, before whose tribunal the great ones of the earth continually stand, and hear the

truth which could not elsewhere be spoken to them. He discourses on the principles according to which actions are to be judged, and how true greatness and goodness in actions are to be discerned. He points out how history warns nations against vanity and boastfulness, the too eager pursuit of wealth and of external advantages, ambition and war. Sacred history he describes as a picture of the divine government of the world and of the course of the education of the human race; and profane history as also essentially religious and moral in its tendency and teaching. He insists with due emphasis that absolute truthfulness is the prime requisite of history. He indicates the importance of the search for causes, and what care is needed to distinguish real from apparent causes; as also the special claims which the characters of great men, and all that relates to laws, manners, and religion, have on the attention of the historical student. He attempts to apply his principles to, and illustrate his precepts by, select chapters of sacred and profane history; but in this part of his task he is not very successful. As to Rollin, then, we may sum up thus: he recommends the study of history with a warm and earnest eloquence; his reflections on history are morally impressive and religiously edifying; but they throw no light on the methodology of history.

Historical scepticism appeared in a very extravagant form in the publications of John Hardouin (1646-1729). This Jesuit Father was a man of great learning, and especially eminent as a numismatist; but he was of a very singular character of mind and maintained very extraordinary opinions. He is well described in his epitaph written by his friend De Boze: "In expectatione judicii hic jacet hominum paradoxotatos, natione Gallus, religione Romanus, orbis literati portentum: venerandæ antiquitatis cultor et destructor, docte febricitans, somnia et inaudita commenta vigilans edidit. Scepticum pie egit, credulitate puer, audacia juvenis, deliriis senex." Père Hardouin had enormous vanity and ambition, and the utmost contempt for the abilities and views of other scholars. He placed little faith in books or documents, but immense trust in his medals. It was very largely from medals that he sought to construct the chronology and history of ancient and medieval

times. The ordinary or traditional history he regarded as almost entirely the invention of monks of the thirteenth century who wished to substitute for Christianity a belief in fate. These monks, he held, had either entirely or virtually fabricated the works attributed to Thucydides, Livy, Terence, Ovid; and, indeed, all the so-called classical writings of antiquity, except those of Homer and Herodotus, Cicero and the elder Pliny, the Georgics of Virgil and the Satires and Epistles of Horace. The chronicles and documents relating to the Franks he likewise pronounced to be forgeries. These and suchlike conclusions confidently maintained by a man who through his edition of the 'Natural History' of Pliny had early acquired the highest reputation for learning, whose industry and ingenuity were amazing, and whose publications succeeded one another in an incessant and rapid flow, naturally excited agitation and controversy. His ecclesiastical superiors feeling the faith of the Church in the genuineness and antiquity of the Scriptures undermined by his scepticism, compelled him in 1708 to publish a retractation, but he neither changed his obnoxious views nor ceased to repeat them. All through the first quarter of the eighteenth century Hardouin's hypotheses were under dispute. They were generally and often violently condemned, but the controversies to which they gave rise also made manifest the extent to which scepticism had invaded the province of history. They showed that not a few people were disposed to regard the *bon mot* ascribed to Fénélon, "L'histoire n'est qu'une fable convenue," as an arrow which nearly hit the mark. They helped to bring into due prominence questions as to historical certitude which lie at the basis of historical methodology: How far is historical testimony to be trusted at all? what is genuine and what false in history, and how are we to distinguish between them? It was during this period that these questions for the first time clearly presented themselves in the consciousness of historians. Later on in the century they became familiar even to the common mind.

Of much greater significance and influence than the paradoxical arguments of Hardouin was the discussion carried on during a series of years in the Academy of Inscriptions. It was conducted throughout in a truly scientific spirit, and may

not unreasonably be held to mark an epoch in the development of historical criticism.

The two papers of Father Anselm, 'Sur les monuments qui ont servi de Mémoires aux premiers historiens,' read in 1720, may be regarded as opening the discussion. In these essays the Abbé endeavoured to establish that antiquity had not been so devoid of literary and other means of recording events as had been represented, and that the most ancient historians had based their narratives on memorials of various kinds. The only merit, however, which can fairly be ascribed to him, is that of having seen that there was a great question as to historical certitude which demanded an answer. He did not examine the question closely, or perceive clearly the conditions to be fulfilled by any one who would answer it. His own answer to it is loose and inconclusive.

Much more important was the 'Dissertation sur l'incertitude de l'histoire des quatre premiers siècles de Rome,' read by M. de Pouilly before the Academy on the 15th December 1722. By limiting the question as to historic certitude to the consideration of a wisely selected special period of history, he at once rendered it more precise, and made more apparent how vital it was. As a general question the time had not yet come for its profitable discussion. Controversy regarding the truth or falsity of the story of the first four centuries of Rome as told by her own historians, could not fail to be suggestive and useful. Pouilly was not the first to entertain doubts regarding that story. Almost with the first awakening of the modern critical spirit came suspicion as to the credibility of the traditional story of early Rome. Lorenzo Valla gave expression to it in the fifteenth century, and Glareanus in the sixteenth. In the seventeeth century Holland possessed a school of learned criticism which had its chief seat at Leyden, and of that school one member, Bochart, showed that the traditions as to Æneas were unhistorical; another, Gronovius, argued that the story of Romulus was a legend; and a third, Perizonius, brought to light the frequent contradictions of the Roman historians, and declared that the earlier books of Livy contained traces of the popular songs of primitive Rome. Just in the year previous to that in which Pouilly's dissertation was read, the profound

and ingenious Neapolitan philosopher, Vico, had begun in his 'De Constantia Jurisprudentis' to propound the hypothesis as to early Roman history which he afterwards stated in a more developed form in the first edition of the 'Scienza Nuova' (1725), and which so remarkably anticipated the conclusions reached by Niebuhr, Mommsen, and others in the present century. But Pouilly knew nothing about Vico; and further, his criticism is merely negative, whereas that of Vico was but a clearing of the ground for the work of construction. He begins his dissertation by laying down the general proposition that ancient history is so filled with fictions that all the annals of the ancient peoples should be the subject of a strict criticism; and then he undertakes to prove that Roman history ought to be regarded as uncertain until the time of the wars of Pyrrhus. In doing so he anticipates, but expressly denies, the applicability of the charge of "Pyrrhonism," or scepticism in an unfavourable sense; he merely refuses, he says, to assent to what is not adequately authenticated. The earliest writers who profess to give an account of the history of Rome during the first four centuries had not, he contends, the means of knowing what that history was. They allow it to appear that they did not themselves regard what they recounted, to be certain. They only worked up the traditions and legends which were afloat into a plausible continuous narrative. Their accounts do not agree. Stories drawn from foreign sources have been incorporated into what is described as native history; such events as the birth, exposure, and death of Romulus, the deeds of the Horatii and Curiatii, of Curtius, &c., never happened, the accounts of them being merely fictions transplanted from Greece.

The Abbé Sallier replied in two discourses, the first of which, 'Sur les premiers Monuments historiques des Romains,' was read on the 10th of April 1723; and the second, 'Sur la Certitude de l'Histoire des quatre premiers siècles de Rome,' on the 11th of February 1724. In the former he maintained that historical records, the 'Annales Pontificum,' 'Libri Lintei,' &c., had been kept at Rome from its foundation; that they had survived the burning of the city by the Gauls; and that they had been consulted and closely followed by Fabius and Cincius,

Livy and Dionysius, so that the extant narratives of the two last-named historians are entitled to be received with respect and confidence. In other words, he answered Pouilly in substantially the same manner as Wachsmuth answered Niebuhr. In the latter discourse he argued that the conformity between certain features of Roman and Grecian history, which had been made prominent in the treatise 'Of Greek and Roman Parallels,' ascribed to Plutarch, afforded no legitimate presumption against the credibility of the Roman annals.

M. Fréret intervened in the debate on the 17th March 1724, by 'Réflexions sur l'étude des anciennes histoires, et sur le degré de certitude de leurs preuves.' Acknowledging that the great scholars of the past century had done much to dispel the darkness over ancient history, he affirmed that much still remained to be done, and that it would be accomplished if inquirers would lay aside their preconceptions, be on their guard against the love of system, start only from well-ascertained particulars, and proceed to general views in a strictly inductive manner. He has some admirable pages on the perverting influence of the spirit of system, and on the difference between this spirit and the spirit of method, the philosophical spirit. "True criticism," he says, "is nothing else than the philosophical spirit applied to the discussion of facts." It is equally opposed to credulity and scepticism. Credulity has been the fault of previous ages; scepticism had now become the danger. To avoid both it is necessary to have correct views of historical certitude in general, and of degrees of certitude. This is the subject, accordingly, of which Fréret treats. Historical proofs, he says, may be reduced to two classes—contemporary testimonies and traditions. The former are of various kinds, but if they are sufficiently proved to be genuine, and their authors to have been honest, and so circumstanced as to be able to know the truth, they are accepted by all reasonable people. Their superiority to traditions, those popular beliefs which rest only on their own persistence and prevalence, and cannot be traced back to any contemporary testimony, is denied by no one. It is only tradition which is assailed. And, argues Fréret, tradition is not to be indiscriminately or wholly rejected. If it be, we shall have little left us to believe as to the course and events of history. For except

the evidence of eyewitnesses all is tradition in history; and even the authority of contemporary witnesses is largely dependent on tradition. The false can be separated from the true, the incredible from the credible, the more from the less probable, in tradition; as, indeed, requires to be done also in contemporary written history. The distinction between the two classes of historical proofs is not absolute. Testimony and tradition support and supplement each other. Fréret, it seems to me, does not in this part of his memoir show his usual clearness and independence of mind, but allows his judgment to be unduly influenced by fear of the consequences which would result from a strict application of the rules of historical criticism to ancient history. He concludes by endeavouring to confirm the argumentation of the Abbé Sallier in his first discourse; to prove that the Romans, like other ancient peoples, had contemporary records, in the form of inscriptions, acts, treaties, and written registers, from very early times.

M. de Pouilly returned to the subject in his 'Nouveaux Essais de Critique sur la fidélité de l'Histoire,' read Dec. 22, 1724. The general tenor of his reasoning may be indicated as follows: We must neither grant to fables the credit which they do not deserve, nor deny to facts the credit which they merit; we must avoid alike credulity and scepticism. Truth and error are closely intermingled in history, but there are marks by which they may be distinguished and separated. The love of the marvellous, interest, vanity, party-spirit, and other causes, are constantly leading to the falsification of history. Neither testimony nor tradition is to be received when they contradict experience. The intrinsic probability or improbability of the things reported has always to be taken into account. Authentic history rests on the testimony of contemporaries, proved to be such by the testimony of later writers; and a chain of witnesses of this kind is intrinsically different from, and immensely more reliable than, a series of depositories or transmitters of tradition. In judging of the credibility of historians we have to take into account their circumstances, characters, the estimates formed of their fidelity by those best qualified to criticise them, and how far they agree with or contradict what other historians of the same events have recorded. "Tradition

is a popular rumour of which the origin is unknown; an account of alleged fact transmitted to us by a succession of men of which the first are beyond our ken; a chain of which we hold one end but of which the other is lost in the abyss of the past. It is, therefore, essentially different from history. We can judge of an historical account by the character of its author: we can only judge of a tradition by its age, its extension, and the nature of its content." A late origin and a limited diffusion testify to the falsity of a tradition; but remoteness of origin and wide prevalence are no evidences of its truth. By increasing its volume it does not increase its weight. As to the nature of its content there are so many causes of believing traditions other than their truth, and so many motives and influences which alter and pervert them, that it speedily becomes almost impossible to ascertain whether there is any historical truth in them, or what it is. Traditions are not, indeed, mere fictions; it is even sometimes possible to perceive in a vague manner, in dim outline, the historical facts out of which they originated. "As regards, for example, the early history of Rome, there are several traditions, which, if reduced to simple and general propositions, cannot reasonably be called in question. Those which relate to the shameful defeat of the Romans near the Caudine Forks, the seditious retreats of the populace because of the cruelty exercised by the rich towards the poor, and various others, are instances." But such instances are exceptions. It is seldom that we can succeed thus far; and we can never be certain of the particulars of traditional story. The Greek, Jewish, Mohammedan, Abyssinian, Irish, Scottish, and other fabulous histories are referred to in proof. The early history of Rome is, then, again maintained to be as a whole untrustworthy; and the arguments which had been employed by Sallier and Fréret to show that it was, on the contrary, credible history resting on contemporary testimonies, are examined and rejected.

To this part of the communication Sallier replied in his 'Troisième Discours sur la certitude de l'Histoire des quatre premiers siècles de Rome,' read on the 10th April 1725. It closed the discussion, so far as the Academy was concerned.

The debate which I have thus summarised did honour to

all who took part in it. Its special problem was of the greatest interest and importance, and it was dealt with in a truly critical and historical spirit alike by De Pouilly and his antagonists. The former justly repelled the charge of historical Pyrrhonism which the latter brought against him. It was entirely without foundation. His views were reached on purely critical and historical grounds. There is no historical scepticism in demanding that real and adequate evidence be produced for professedly historical statements; and this was all that De Pouilly did. But perhaps the interest and importance of the debate lay as much in the general question which it brought to light as in the special question with which it directly dealt. It led to asking for the first time in a clear and general form, How authentic history is to be distinguished from merely traditional history? What are the conditions of historical credibility, and the principles of historical evidence and certitude? It directed attention to the fact that there must be a logic of historical investigation to which historians are bound to conform, and which they require to discover in order that they may be able to conform to it in the prosecution of difficult inquiries. It is on this account that I have spoken of the debate as marking an epoch in the progress of Historic.

Louis de Beaufort followed in the footsteps of De Pouilly. In his 'Dissertation sur l'incertitude des cinq premiers siècles de l'Histoire Romaine,' which was published at Utrecht in 1738, he maintained substantially the same views as the French Academician. He expounded and defended them, however, more elaborately, and was more successful in giving them currency. In the preface to his treatise he acknowledges that the composition of his work was suggested by the debate between De Pouilly and Sallier. The treatise itself consists of two parts: the first being "an inquiry concerning the original records, memorials, treaties, and other monuments from which proper materials could be drawn for compiling the history of the first ages of Rome, and of the historians who compiled it;" and the second being "an examination of some of the principal events that are said to have happened during that period, wherein the inconsistencies of the histories with one another,

and with the few original pieces which were saved when Rome was burned by the Gauls, is proved."

Niebuhr, who has made no mention of De Pouilly, has thus written regarding Beaufort and his book: "Beaufort was ingenious, and had read much, though he was not a philologer. One or two sections in his treatise are very able and satisfactory; others, on the contrary, feeble and superficial. Bayle is the master whom he implicitly follows throughout; the soul of his book is scepticism; he does nothing but deny or upset; or, if he ever tries to build, the edifice is frail and untenable. Yet the influence and reputation of his book spread extraordinarily. For Roman history had almost entirely escaped the attention and care of philologers; those who chiefly interested themselves about it, though not more than about that of other nations, were intelligent men of the world; and for their use it was at that time handled by several authors, without pretensions or view to learning or research. Such of these as did not wholly overlook the earlier centuries, under the notion that they were of no importance, were so well satisfied with Beaufort's inquiry as to give them up altogether."[1] In all respects but one Niebuhr has in these words very justly appreciated his precursor; but in that one respect he is entirely wrong. There is no evidence for thinking that Beaufort implicitly followed Bayle, or even followed him at all. There is not a trace of Bayle's influence, so far as I can see, in his book. Nor is there any warrant for saying that "the soul of his book is scepticism." There is nothing which can properly be called "scepticism" in it. It is simply a critical investigation which arrives at a result that is on the whole negative,—the conclusion that the Roman tradition is for the most part merely a legend, not authentic history.

The philosophical spirit of the eighteenth century first manifested itself conspicuously in the treatment of history in three works which appeared at no great distance in time from one another: Montesquieu's 'Spirit of Laws,' published in 1748, Turgot's 'Discourses at the Sorbonne,' published in 1750, and Voltaire's 'Essay on the Manners and Spirit of Nations,' published in 1756. Montesquieu, Turgot, and Voltaire were

[1] History of Rome, preface, p. 7 (Eng. tr.)

the chief initiators of the reflective or philosophical study of history which now prevails. It is therefore incumbent on me to consider what these three remarkable men accomplished in this connection.

II.

Charles Louis de Secondat, Baron de Montesquieu, was born at La Brède, near Bordeaux, on the 18th of January 1689.[1] In the twenty-fifth year of his age he became a councillor in the parliament of Bordeaux, and two years later chief-justice (*président à mortier*). After holding the latter office for two years he resigned, in order to devote himself entirely to study and literature. The law of France was at that time so irrational, and even brutal, that a wise and humane man like Montesquieu must have often felt the administration of it hateful; yet his practical experience as a legislator and judge was doubtless admirable preparation for the literary work which he was to accomplish. He at first occupied himself chiefly with subjects belonging to physics and natural science, and by 1719 he had sketched 'A History of the Earth.' It was well that he abandoned this too ambitious scheme; but the conception of it did him honour, and the labour spent on it must have been advantageous to the 'Spirit of Laws.'

At the age of thirty-two he published the 'Lettres Persanes': "ce livre si frivole et si aisé à faire," as Voltaire has unjustly

[1] As to the biography of Montesquieu and the bibliography of his writings and of writings regarding him, Vian's (L.) 'Histoire de Montesquieu' (1878) is indispensable. M. Brunetière's severe criticism of the work, however, is not essentially unjust (Rev. d. Deux Mondes, 1879). Compare Caro, 'La Fin du dix-huitième siècle,' tom. i. ch. 2. Bersot and Damiron have treated of Montesquieu's general philosophy. Lerminier, Heron, Bluntschli, and Janet have expounded his legal and political philosophy. Auguste Comte and Sir G. C. Lewis have made some most valuable remarks on his historical views, by which I have endeavoured to profit. Villemain, Sainte-Beuve, Nisard, and many others, have sought to delineate his personal and literary character. The best edition of his works is Laboulaye's in 7 vols., 1873-79. M. Albert Sorel's 'Montesquieu' (1887) is an excellent general monograph. Of the 'Deux Opuscules de Montesquieu, publiés par M. le Baron de Montesquieu' (1891), the first, 'Réflections sur la monarchie universelle en Europe,' which was printed in 1725, but withheld from publication, contains in germ a considerable number of the ideas which attained maturity in 'L'Esprit des Lois.' Baron de Montesquieu has since published 'Mélanges inédits de Montesquieu,' 1892.

said; "ce livre, si fort, léger en apparence, d'une gaieté habile et profondément calculée," as Michelet has truthfully characterised it. It at once placed its author in the first rank of the French writers of the age, and made him famous throughout Europe. It had the appearance of an ornamental plaything meant merely to sparkle and please, but it was in reality a terrible weapon skilfully contrived to give deep and incurable wounds to foes who could not otherwise be attacked, or only ineffectually. It satirised with consummate art both the Orient and France, their civil and spiritual governments, their authorities and traditions, their follies and vices. At the same time, it was a book essentially sound and true in spirit, ethical and constructive in purpose. It gave evidence of a singular faculty for the description and analysis of social life, habits, and motives. Many of the views afterwards developed in the 'Esprit des Lois' already found expression in the 'Lettres Persanes.'

Montesquieu sketched the plan of the former of these works as early as 1724; and after admission into the Academy in 1728, he went abroad for several years, and visited Germany, Hungary, Italy, Switzerland, Holland, and England, in order to become acquainted with their manners and institutions. His residence in England lasted from October 1729 to August 1731. In 1734 he published his 'Considérations sur la grandeur et la décadence des Romains.' This work may perhaps be regarded as a section of the 'Esprit des Lois,' detached from it on account of its length; but it forms of itself so perfect a whole, and has such speciality of character, that its separate publication was certainly appropriate. It is the only strictly historical work of Montesquieu which we possess, seeing that the 'Histoire de Louis XI.,' if ever completed, or not burned, has at least not yet been found. And it was also the first work in which a sustained and comprehensive attempt was made to show how the events and course of history have been determined by general physical and moral causes. It is even at the present day one of the most remarkable of the numerous studies to which the surpassing interest of Roman history has given rise. Its originality as regards all that had been previously written on the same subject must be obvious to every competently

informed person. One may well contrast, but one cannot reasonably compare, it with what Machiavelli and Vico taught as to the story of Rome. Saint-Evremond and Saint-Réal may have suggested a few of the views which it contains, but they just as likely did not, and they had at the most only few to give. Bossuet's grand sketch may be even more admirable in its kind than that of Montesquieu, but it is of an essentially different kind, being taken from a point of view not within but above history. Of course, in the present state of our knowledge neither all the statements as to fact, nor all the explanations, in the 'Considérations' can be accepted; but were the particular faults of the work much more numerous and serious than they are, it would still have to be accounted a production of rare historical merit and value.

Sixteen years elapsed, and the 'Esprit des Lois' appeared. It bore on its front a claim to originality in the epigraph: "Prolem sine matre creatam." The secret of its formation was disclosed in these words of its preface: "I have many times begun, and as often abandoned this work. I have a thousand times cast to the winds the leaves which I had written; I have often felt my paternal hands fall. I have followed my object without forming a plan; I have known neither rules nor exceptions; I have found the truth only to lose it again. But when I once discovered my principles, everything I sought for came to me; and in the course of twenty years, I have seen my work begun, growing up, advancing towards completion, and finished." His twenty years of labours were justified and rewarded by the result. The 'Spirit of Laws' not only enjoyed an immediate popularity which carried it through twenty-one editions in eighteen months, not only exerted a vast and beneficial practical influence, but will always retain, owing to the comprehensiveness, penetration, and ingenuity of the treatment of its great theme, a distinguished place among the few works which have advanced most the most difficult of sciences.

It did not however, escape, unjust criticism and bigoted hostility, which called forth from Montesquieu the brilliant and ironical 'Défense de l'Esprit des Lois,' published in 1750. He wrote little of importance after this. His death occurred at Paris on the 10th of February 1755.

He was a man of shrewd practical sense, of social tact, and of well-regulated life, although not of untainted imagination; neither vain nor anxious for glory, but not without aristocratic pride, a keen eye to his own interest, and the full consciousness of his own worth and ability; honourable, considerate of the feelings of others, and charitable. His love of liberty and justice was at once ardent and enlightened. His intellect was alike vigorous and alert, comprehensive and intense, indefatigable in seeking the satisfaction of a boundless curiosity, and tenacious in the prosecution of a distant aim. He was not less eminent as a literary artist than as a scientist.

There has been much discussion as to his originality. I believe him to have been highly endowed with that most valuable sort of originality which enables a man to draw with independence from the most varied sources, and to use what he obtains according to a plan and principles and for a purpose of his own,—the originality of Aristotle and Adam Smith. He has been suspected to have owed much to Vico, and to have concealed his obligations. The suspicion only proves that those who entertained it had little knowledge of either author. Montesquieu may possibly have read Vico's work. Although a conjecture unsupported by any positive evidence, it is not an improbable conjecture, that the 'Scienza Nuova' came into his hands when he was in Italy, or that he learned to know it at a later date through his friend the Abbé de Guasco. But if he ever read it, the impression which it produced on him must have been almost confined to one point. His most serious defects are just those which a careful study of Vico might have removed. The thoughts which give Vico a place of special and signal honour in the history of science, if ever known to Montesquieu, were not appreciated by him, and have produced no effect on his writings. Substantially the whole argument for his indebtedness to the great Neapolitan rests on the circumstance that he was preceded by him in distinguishing from the form of government the fact which gives it birth and the principle which gives it force. This anticipation of the theory of the one thinker by the other is indubitable and remarkable, and Vico is entitled to whatever honour may be involved in it, but it is no proof of dependence or plagiarism on

the part of Montesquieu. The range of his obligations was, however, very wide, including the classical writers, the Protestant pamphleteers of the sixteenth century, such as Hotman, Languet, &c., Bodin, Charron, Machiavelli and Gravina, Descartes and several of his school, Locke and other English writers particularly on politics, physicists, travellers, &c.

The title of Montesquieu's *magnum opus* expresses well its central and pervading conception. The work is an attempt to discover the *spirit* of laws; to explain them; to trace how they are related to manners, climates, creeds, and forms of government. It is an attempt to view them in all lights in which they can be viewed, so as to show how they arise; how they are modified; how they act on private character, on domestic life, on social forms and institutions; and, in a word, so as to elicit their full meaning. This conception, it will be observed, is entirely different from that of Bossuet. He took a theological doctrine to begin with, and tried to show how all history had been the exemplification of it. He started, that is to say, with a doctrine which he had not derived from history; and that doctrine he introduced into history as a principle of explanation. It is quite otherwise with Montesquieu. He assumes no doctrine extraneous to history, but begins with the facts of history themselves, with the positive laws which either are or have been on the earth. He seeks merely to account for these laws as so many historical facts. The difference between these two conceptions is very great; and obviously, so far as science is concerned, that of Montesquieu is far in advance of that of Bossuet. Scientifically, the method of Bossuet is radically wrong; that of Montesquieu is good so far as it goes.

But how has Montesquieu elaborated and applied his conception? He has done so in various respects, with great success and ability. He had a genuine love of history for its own sake, and a singularly keen historic insight; he had a calm, unprejudiced, fair mind; he was distinguished by a liberality and moderation of feeling and judgment, which, while it did not exclude a true though tempered zeal for human good, gave him the breadth, and steadiness, and dispassionate clearness of view which his subject demanded. No one is less chargeable than

Montesquieu with what was a common fault among his contemporaries, one-sidedness, philosophical sectarianism, perversion of social facts from contempt of them or to serve a party purpose. He has accordingly arrived at least at approximate explanations of a host of social phenomena.

There lay, however, a danger before Montesquieu which he has not safely escaped, a difficulty which he has not overcome. It was that of looking on laws too much as isolated facts, as independent phenomena, as stationary and complete existences. It was that of ignoring the relation not only of one law to another, but of one stage of law to another, and of the relation of each stage and system of law to coexistent and contemporaneous stages and systems of religion, art, science, and industry. Social phenomena such as laws are, cannot be explained like the merely physical phenomena of natural philosophy and chemistry. The most distinctive characteristics which they possess lie in their capacities of continuous evolution or development; and it is only by the study of their evolution, by the comparison of their consecutive states, and of each state with the coexisting general conditions of society, that we can rationally hope to reach an adequate knowledge of their laws. It is here that we find the chief weakness of Montesquieu.

He was most industrious in the collection of facts, and he had a quite marvellous quickness and keenness of intuition into the meaning of them, but he had no appropriate scientific method, no definite notion of the modifications of the inductive process which the peculiarities of historical phenomena render necessary. He made little use, no systematic use, of what is, however, *par excellence, the expedient* of historical philosophy, the comparison of coexistent and consecutive social states. He paid always little attention, generally none, to the chronology of his facts, which is, however, the indispensable condition of their comparison. The reason was that he did not perceive the importance of comparing them, of following them through the whole course of their evolution; but this is only saying in other words that he attempted to construct a science without availing himself of the only method by which it could be done. It would be unjust, however, to censure severely this error of Montesquieu, although it is fatal to his system as a complete

explanation of the class of social phenomena with which it deals; for while true that Bodin had on this fundamental point more comprehensive and philosophic views, we may well excuse any man of the eighteenth century for ignorance the most entire of the science of comparative legislations, which, like the comparative study of religions, is a creation of the nineteenth century.

Devoid of a true method of investigation, Montesquieu could not, except by chance, discover the general laws which connect social facts. The laws of history are laws of development, and if we ignore the development of any fact, we can never discover the law according to which it has come to be what it is. What then has Montesquieu discovered? Not the general laws of the facts, but certain special reasons of them. That was to a considerable degree possible to him, notwithstanding the neglect of the distinctive characteristics of social phenomena. Where a general law could not be reached, an intellect so keen in its intuitions might still detect a force or forces in which some given law or custom had its origin; and this was what Montesquieu had a rare degree of success in doing. His quickness of perception, his suggestiveness of thought, his intimate acquaintance with the working of human motives, and the extent of his reading in history, travels, and natural science, gave him a quite marvellous power of conjecture, and enabled him to arrive at approximate explanations of social usages and laws in a vast number of cases where another man would have been helpless. Still no faculty of guessing, however extraordinary and felicitous, can supply the place of scientific method, or elicit much historical philosophy not of the humblest kind. And although it may happen to be, as it was in Montesquieu, fertile in a kind of truths, it can hardly fail to be fertile also in illusions. If it often seize a verity, it will often likewise impose on itself a fancy. It is only a sound method which is competent to the uniform and consistent discrimination of truth from error. This is fully exemplified in the case of Montesquieu, no serious student of whose work will deny that it abounds in false as well as in correct generalisations. It is rich in truths, yet crowded with errors. It is scarcely more exuberant in the one respect than in the other.

The want of a scientific method of investigation is also the source of the confused arrangement, the structural disorder, of the book. There are, it is true, those who have not recognised this defect, who have even denied that it exists, and praised the plan as simple and grand; but this only proves that they have studied it superficially. There is an outward order of a loose kind, and an imposing appearance of order; but all the order there is, is of the outward and surface kind, while the confusion is internal, and so all-pervading that examination finds no end to it. Thoughts are juxtaposited not organically connected, because they have been amassed merely by industrious collection and fertility of suggestion, and not elicited and collected by scientific method.

The same want, and the consequent dealing with laws and customs as isolated and fragmentary phenomena, and reference of them to particular causes not to general laws, have exposed Montesquieu to the commonest charge brought against him,—that of confounding fact with right, the explanation of a thing with its justification. This charge has been often expressed in an exaggerated way. Perhaps it should even, on the whole, be held unproved, and Montesquieu absolved. It is certainly not applicable to him in the same degree as to Aristotle, or, to take a modern name, Mr Buckle. The frequently recurring phrase "ought to be" is ambiguous and objectionable; it is, however, almost certainly meant to express not a moral or rational necessity, but only that sort of actual necessity which there always is between a cause and its consequence. His mode of investigation, however, tended towards the serious confusion imputed to him, and he has undoubtedly on several occasions been far from sufficiently careful to guard himself from the suspicion of having fallen into it.

The subject of Montesquieu's book being laws, he very properly begins with two chapters of general considerations on the nature of laws. But, unfortunately, these two chapters, although they have been repeatedly eulogised beyond measure, are by no means satisfactory. The language of them is so vague as to apply, when it does apply, not only to all kinds of laws, physical and moral, natural and positive, proper and metaphorical, but to many things which never go even by that name.

There is no attempt to disentangle the perplexing ambiguities of the term law; no attempt to distinguish and define the different kinds of laws. And underlying this confusion there is, in particular, the vaguest and even an erroneous conception of the nature of an inductive law. These two chapters show, what the whole treatise confirms, that Montesquieu had no clear or correct conception of what such a law is.

To those who have never tried to trace the history of ideas this may seem incredible; to those who have, it will be in no wise strange. A distinct, consciously realised notion of law in its present scientific acceptation was unknown to Greece, Rome, or the middle ages. Of the seven meanings which Aristotle attributes to the word principle, not one answers to the modern scientific signification of law; and of the thirty terms defined in the fourth book of his 'Metaphysics,' which is a sort of philosophical glossary, law does not occur. Law was thought of by the ancients as a type or idea with something external corresponding to it. And Montesquieu's thought was no closer, no more definite, than that laws were "the necessary relations which arise out of the nature of things." A metaphysician or theologian may be satisfied with that, but certainly no student of inductive science, physical, psychical, or social.

Notwithstanding the defects indicated, it must be admitted that these two chapters have the great merit of insisting that social institutions and regulations are properly no mere arbitrary inventions, but ought to rest on reason, on the nature of things; that there are relations of equity which human legislation does not create but presuppose; that, varied as are the forms which society assumes, they all originate in and are pervaded by the principles of a human nature common to all men. They have the farther merit that along with this recognition of fundamental unity there is the clearest recognition likewise of superstructural variety, and of the necessity of laws being adapted to the distinctive peculiarities of each nation and age, these peculiarities being, in the opinion of Montesquieu, of such decisive importance that the laws which are good for one people will rarely suit another. He thus separates himself on the one hand from the empty abstract

theorist, and on the other from the rude literal empiricist, and seeks the golden mean of political wisdom.

By the spirit of a law, Montesquieu means the whole of the relations in which that law originates and exists. A most important order of these relations comprises those in which laws stand to the various kinds of governments; and this order of relations is the general subject of not fewer than nine books, besides being frequently returned to in others. Montesquieu divides governments into *monarchies,* in which a single person governs by fixed laws; *despotisms,* in which a single person governs according to his own will; and *republics,* in which the sovereign power is in several hands, being a *democracy* when the nation as a whole possesses it, and an *aristocracy* when only a part thereof shares in it. He endeavours to characterise these various governments, to discover their principles or motive forces, and to show what laws flow from their respective natures, what are the sources of their strength and weakness, the systems of education most suitable to them, and the causes of corruption most powerful in them; and how with the variations of their respective genius, the civil and criminal codes, sumptuary laws and laws relative to women, and the military arrangements both for offensive and defensive war, must likewise vary. In doing so he arrives at a large number of consequences, often very remote and heterogeneous consequences, which he expresses mostly in the form of general and absolute propositions. Probably as many of these propositions are false as true.

But there is in this part of the work a still greater defect than the commingling of true and false conclusions: that, in fact, which is its source,—the blending and consequent confusing of two methods. If we wish to ascertain the character and consequences of monarchy, for example, we may proceed in our search either by induction or deduction. In the former case we endeavour from an examination of all monarchies to generalise what is common to them in virtue exclusively of being monarchies. In the latter case we start from a definition which embodies what we suppose to be the distinctive nature of monarchy, and logically evolve what it implies. If in the former case the induction be sufficiently extensive and careful,

and if in the latter the presupposition involved in the definition be warranted and the deduction rigorous, the results of the two methods should so coincide as to afford mutual verification; but in order to this the two processes must be kept separate and distinct—inductions must not be passed off as deductions, nor *vice versâ;* the ideal and the empirical must not be allowed to coalesce until they meet at the definitive point of union,—in essential reality. If Montesquieu had either done so, or adhered strictly to either method, he would certainly never have arrived at so many general theorems. With every extension of his inductive basis, and every effort at rigid verification, he would have found many of them drop away, and learned that it was an extremely difficult task to detect the characteristics which are the pure results of the form of government. With a clear consciousness that the greater part of his reasoning was deduction from hypothetical premisses; and that consequently his inferences, however correctly drawn, had only logical and not actual validity, except in so far as the hypotheses assumed were in accordance with fact, he would have felt bound strictly to inquire whether they were so or not, and would probably have speedily perceived that monarchies, despotisms, and republics, as defined by him, had merely an ideal existence—that his definitions, and the classification on which they rested, had nothing either in the history of the past or present corresponding to them otherwise than most remotely. It was because he kept neither to induction nor deduction, but passed from the one process to the other, or mixed up the one with the other in an illegitimate way, that conclusions came to him so easily. It was thus that he was able, on the one hand, to believe himself to be extracting and concentrating the legislative experience of mankind in his descriptions, when he was merely making affirmations about abstractions; and, on the other hand, to raise narrow empirical generalisations almost to the level of necessary truths, so that the peculiarities of the French monarchy are transformed into essential attributes of monarchy, the peculiarities of the oriental despotisms into universal attributes of despotism, and the peculiarities of the Greek republics into universal attributes of republicanism.

While Montesquieu treated of governments in their own

natures and in their relations to one another, he did not, like Aristotle and Bodin, endeavour to trace their revolutions and transformations. He propounded no theory of the general movement of humanity, nor attempted any survey of the course of universal history.

The relation of laws to liberty as regards the political constitution, the security of the citizen, and taxation, is the subject of the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth books. They are all celebrated, and especially the eleventh, owing to its application of the theory of the three powers—legislative, executive, and judiciary—to the explanation of the constitution of England, and owing to its eulogy of that constitution. The general theory of the three powers was derived by both Locke and Montesquieu from Aristotle. The application of it made by Montesquieu may have been suggested by Locke's 'Second Treatise concerning Government,' and the party pamphlets of the Whigs and Tories under George II.; but it had not been explicitly made by Locke, nor has it been shown to have been so made by any of the English Whig or Tory pamphleteers. The view of H. Jansen (Montesquieu's 'Theorie von der Dreitheilung der Gewalten im Staate,' p. 26), that its source was Swift's 'Discourse of the Contests and Dissensions between the Nobles and the Commons in Athens and Rome' (Swift's Works, vol. iii., ed. 1814), is altogether erroneous. Montesquieu never claimed originality for his ideas as to the British constitution, but it was attributed to them, without denial or discussion, both by Continental and British writers. Blackstone in his 'Commentaries' (1765), and still more De Lolme in his 'Constitution of England' (1775), developed them into what continued to be until recently the accepted theory of English constitutionalism.

Montesquieu's eulogy of the British constitution has often been misunderstood and misrepresented. It referred only to its relation to political liberty; to the provision made by it for security under the law. Montesquieu had a very unfavourable opinion of British political virtue, honour, and regard to equality. There is no warrant for supposing that he imagined that even political liberty could be gained by simply manipulating the political constitution. He would have been most

inconsistent if he had taught, either expressly or implicitly, that the transference of the constitution of England to France would be an adequate remedy for the evils of the latter country. It was of the very essence of his juridical and political doctrine that positive institutions and laws are far more the effects of a nation's character than its causes, and that it is vain to expect any good from transplanting the laws and institutions of one nation to another differing from it in race, mental and moral qualities, historical antecedents, and physical conditions.

The five books which follow treat of the effect of physical agencies on social institutions and changes. What are the influences of which the presence would be most easily detected in laws and customs by a thinker with no better method of investigation than that which Montesquieu had? There can be only the one answer: physical influences. Of the forces which act on man and shape his destiny, none are so conspicuous, and, we may almost say, so palpable. Hence it was principally by them that Montesquieu sought to explain history. How has civilisation been modified by the action of the external world? How are the laws of a people and the other products of its social and moral life connected with temperature, soil, and food? That is the fundamental problem for Montesquieu, to the solution of which he devotes all his strength.

It would be absurd to say that he has solved it. We know only very imperfectly, even at present, the influence of physical agencies on man's development. The meteorologist, chemist, physiologist, ethnologist, and political economist, have all much to discover before the historical philosopher will be able to pronounce an adequate decision on this large and important question. The errors into which Montesquieu has fallen appear to be chiefly two. And, first, he has drawn no decided distinction between the direct and the indirect influence of physical causes, which is a quite fundamental distinction. The direct or immediate action of climate, soil, and food is probably feeble, and its working is certainly very obscure. Our knowledge of it is both little and dubious. Perhaps, indeed, not a single general proposition regarding it has yet been conclusively established. The indirect influence, on the other hand, or that which physical

agencies exert through the medium of the social wants and activities which they excite, is very great; and since the time of Montesquieu not a little has been accomplished in the way of tracing it. The advance of geographical knowledge, for instance, on one side, and of the science of political economy on another, now permits us to survey, with a comprehensiveness and clearness impossible in the time of Montesquieu, the whole range of relationships between geographical and economical facts; and no one will deny that all the higher orders of social phenomena are intimately associated with the latter of these.

The error just indicated is closely connected with another. The direct action of physical agencies must obviously be a necessary mode of action,—one which is independent of volition,—one in which the man is passive. The indirect action, on the contrary, presupposes a reaction on man's part, and a development of his nature under the stimulus of the wants, and in virtue of the activities, proper to it. The confusion of the two forms of action must therefore tend to obscure the great fact of human freedom. It has undoubtedly done so in the case of Montesquieu. For although it be true that he has explicitly affirmed his belief in free agency, and repudiated fatalism, he cannot be exonerated from having at times forgotten this profession in his practice; from having if not directly stated, at least frequently suggested, the inference that laws are the creatures of climate; from having exhibited the nature of man as far more plastic and passive under external influences than it is. Thus he represents the peoples of tropical regions as having been doomed by the overmastering power of physical forces to inevitable slavery and misery. Now there is no doubt that physical conditions have had much to do with the slavery and misery of tropical countries. Where outward nature is exuberant, gigantic, and terrible, she is apt to depress, paralyse, and overpower man, and to give rise to an unequal distribution of wealth, an excess of imagination, and a prevalence of superstition socially pernicious. But while this is true it is only half the truth, and it will be practically a falsehood if separated from its correlative truth that the influence of physical forces on human life is not absolute but relative; that they are advantageous or the reverse, beneficial or pernicious, according to the wealth and knowledge, and still more according

to the energy and virtue, of those on whom they act; that it is not, in strict propriety of speech, nature which is ever at fault, but always man. "It is not nature," says a thoughtful writer, "which is in India too grand—not nature which is in excess, but man who is too little, man who is in defect. Man there is not what he ought to be, not what he was meant to be, not properly man; he wants the intellect and the energy, the love of truth, the sense of personal dignity, the moral and religious convictions which enter into the constitution of true manhood, and therefore it is that nature acts as his enemy: but let him have these, give him these, and nature will come round to his side at once. Nature is no man's enemy except in so far as he is an enemy to himself." [1]

If a tendency to fatalism, however, makes itself felt throughout these books, the corrective and remedial truth is not far to seek; it is established and applied in the very next book, which treats expressly of laws in relation to the principles which form the general spirit, the morals, and manners of a nation. Savages are either wholly devoid or very slightly participant of a general spirit, and in consequence are swayed and determined irresistibly by physical forces; but every civilised people is pervaded by a common spirit, which is in fact but another word for the whole of its civilisation. This spirit is the substance of the people's life, the chief source of their actions, carrying along with it those who are unconscious of it, and those even who wish to resist it; it is incapable of being changed otherwise than slowly and by the concurrence of many agencies, and is feebly modifiable by laws, while so powerfully operative on them as to be able to make them either honoured or despised. In this book there is the enunciation, proof, and varied application of the great principle which Montesquieu had already exemplified in so masterly a manner in the 'Grandeur et Décadence des Romanis': the epoch-making principle that the course of history is on the whole determined by general causes, by widespread and persistent tendencies, by broad and deep undercurrents, and only influenced in a feeble, secondary, and subordinate degree by single events, by definite arguments, by particular enactments, by anything accidental, isolated,

[1] M'Combie's Modern Civilisation in relation to Christianity, pp. 50, 51.

or individual. The recognition of this principle is an essential condition of the possibility of a science of history. To deny it, is to pronounce every notion of such a science absurd; to affirm it, is to express the conviction that with the requisite exertion the science will not fail to arise; to act on and apply it, is to labour in its construction. It was a high service, therefore, to historical science, that Montesquieu apprehended this principle with a clearness and comprehensiveness of view, and illustrated it with an ingenuity and truthfulness, which have perhaps not been surpassed since.

The next four books deal with commerce, with money, and with population in their relation to laws and social changes. They may be regarded as composing a group, and may be read in connection with the thirteenth book, which treats of the relations which the revenues and taxation of a nation have with its liberties. These books introduced the economical element into historical science,—an immense service, whatever be their errors of economical theory. It is incorrect to ascribe the honour of this service, as has been done, to Turgot, or Condorcet, or Saint-Simon, or Comte. It is mainly due to Montesquieu. Of course, in order not to give him more than his due, we must remember that economical science had when he wrote come to be actively cultivated in France; that Vauban, Boisguilbert, Dutot, and Melon had published important works on it; and that Quesnay and the other founders of the famous physiocratic school were his contemporaries. The science of political economy, in fact, was then passing through one of the most interesting periods of its history, one which reflected a change in the history of society itself, which corresponded to a great national movement, the throwing off by France of her feudal and theocratic bonds, and her eager leap towards a secular and industrial polity. It was only natural that Montesquieu in treating of economical subjects should have fallen into a considerable number of errors which were shortly afterwards convincingly exposed, and failed to observe a considerable number of truths which were shortly afterwards conclusively established, by Quesnay, Adam Smith, and their disciples. He occupies a very important place in the history of political science; but it is just where two orders of econom-

ical ideas, two systems, met and crossed each other, the old not yet dead and the new only struggling into life. This is the explanation of most of the inconsistencies and errors which have been discovered in his views on such subjects as trade, taxation, money, and population. The old principles and the new—those of mercantilism and those of physiocracy—both ruled in his mind, and he was unable to make a decisive choice between them. Yet his intellectual superiority was clearly displayed also in the department of economics. His great and distinctive merit in connection with it, however, was that he first brought economical and historical science together in such a way as to constrain them to co-operate in the explanation of social phenomena. He thus showed that a new path of inexhaustible research lay before both; and, as Roscher expresses it, "einen grossartigen, ebenso nationalen wie universalen Fortschritt anbahnte."

The two books which trace the influence of religious beliefs and institutions on laws and government, although far from an adequate treatment of their theme, are eminently judicious so far as they go. They recognise the necessity and importance of religion, and with a warmth and reverence markedly in contrast to the tone of the 'Lettres Persanes.' Reflection and experience had convinced Montesquieu that his earlier opinions and feelings on this subject had been lacking in fairness and moderation; and had opened his eyes to the merits of Christianity, and especially to the number and magnitude of its services to society. Perhaps the chief errors in these two books, as in the preceding book—that on population—regard matters of fact. As it is simply not the case that in warm climates the proportion of male to female births is materially different from what it is in cold climates, and polygamy can consequently be accounted for in no such way, so neither is it the case that orientals are indifferent about religion except in so far as religious change may involve political change; and hence reasoning to and reasoning from that supposition are alike in vain.

The twenty-sixth and twenty-ninth books concern the jurist much more than the historical philosopher. The twenty-

seventh book, which is on the Roman laws of succession, is historical, but probably not very important.

The twenty-eighth book, which is on the origin and revolutions of the civil laws among the French, and the two books on the feudal system with which the work closes, are at once intrinsically valuable and not less interesting to the student of the philosophy of history than of law. Although numerous errors of fact and theory have been detected in them, they display a kind of learning which was very rare and difficult to acquire in the age of Montesquieu, and an originality and power of historical combination rare in any age. They have undoubtedly had great influence in evoking and directing later research into the origin, formation, and constitution of the feudal system and of French medieval society.

Montesquieu had no intention of founding the philosophy of history; and to pronounce him its founder, as Alison has done, is extravagant laudation. It appears to me to be even eulogy in excess of the truth to represent him, as Comte, Maine, and Leslie Stephen have done, as the founder of the historical method. But he did more than any one else to facilitate and ensure its foundation. He showed on a grand scale and in the most effective way, that laws, customs, and institutions can only be judged of intelligently when studied as what they really are, historical phenomena; and that, like all things properly historical, they must be estimated not according to an abstract or absolute standard, but as concrete realities related to given times and places, to their determining causes and condition, and to the whole social organism to which they belong, and the whole social medium in which they subsist. Plato and Aristotle, Machiavelli and Bodin, had already, indeed, inculcated this historical and political relativism; but it was Montesquieu who gained educated Europe over to the acceptance of it. His success was, no doubt, largely due to the ripeness of the time, but it was also in a measure due to his own genius and skill. And once historical relativism was acknowledged, the rise of the historical school, the development of the historical method, and the rapid advance of historical science, naturally followed.

III.

The 'Spirit of Laws' was only completed when its author was nearly sixty years of age, and after he had spent on it twenty years of toil. The work next to be noticed consists simply of two Academic discourses delivered at the Sorbonne in 1750 by a young man of twenty-three, and some sketches or conspectuses written by him, either when a student or shortly after. That young man was, however, Anne Robert James Turgot, one of the wisest and best men of the eighteenth century.[1] He was pure and noble in his private life, a zealous philanthropist, an enlightened philosopher, a humane and able governor, a sagacious statesman. He was the friend of all true progress, but he avoided and reproved the excesses which were advocated in its name. He saw and abhorred the sins of the Church, but they did not hide from him the beauty of religion. He discriminated, as perhaps no other of his contemporaries did, not even Montesquieu, between the good and evil in social institutions, and between the essential and accidental in all things.

The theme of the first of his discourses at the Sorbonne was "The Benefits which the establishment of Christianity has procured to mankind." Briefly but eloquently he contrasts Christian and heathen civilisation, so as to indicate the superiority of the former over the latter, and the unreasonableness of the exaggerated admiration of antiquity, and the contemptuous estimate of Christianity which had begun to prevail. By means of a rapid survey of the general and outstanding facts of history, he seeks to show that the Christian religion had diffused truth,

[1] The following are among the best works on Turgot: (1) Mastier (A.), 'Turgot, sa vie et sa doctrine'; (2) Batbie (A.), 'Turgot: philosophe, économiste, et administrateur' (1861); (3) Foncin (P.), 'Essai sur le ministère de Turgot' (1877); and (4) Neymark (A.), 'Turgot et ses doctrines,' 2 vols. (1885). The 'Éloge de Turgot' of Baudrillart; the two lectures on 'Turgot: his Life, Times, and Opinions,' by Hodgson; the essay on Turgot by Morley in his 'Critical Miscellanies'; and the monograph on Turgot by L. Say,—deserve to be specially mentioned. The 'Correspondance Inédite de Condorcet et de Turgot' (1770-1779), published in 1883, under the supervision of M. Henry, is of some interest to a student of their theories of history. Renouvier has made a careful study of Turgot's theory of progress in the 'Critique Philosophique,' année ix., tom. ii. 385-396, 400-407, année x., tom. i. 17-27.

destroyed errors, promoted intellectual progress, evoked and enlarged human sympathies, improved morals, strengthened what was good, and weakened what was evil in personal and social, private and public life, and, in particular, afforded the needed counterpoise to the universal selfishness from which proceeds universal injustice. The chief reason why Turgot's view of the course of history was so much more comprehensive, and so much more consistent both with facts and in itself, than that of Condorcet and other atheists of the eighteenth century, was that he was able, and they were not, to appreciate in a fair and sympathetic spirit the services which Christianity had rendered to mankind. It would be easy to overestimate, however, the intrinsic worth of the first discourse. For while it is high-toned in thought and eloquent in expression, it has no claim to originality, ingenuity, or thoroughness. Its purpose and limits did not allow, indeed, of the display of these qualities.

The second discourse, which had for its subject "The successive Advances of the human mind," was much more important. Here, for the first time, the idea of progress was made, as M. Caro has said, "the organic principle of history." In contrast to the movement of the physical phenomena of nature, and of the vegetable and animal species, through constantly recurring cycles of change, history is represented as the life of humanity, ever progressing towards perfection, from generation to generation, from stage to stage, from nation to nation, and by alternations of rest and agitation, success and failure, decay and revival. None before Turgot, and few after him, have described so well how age is bound to age, how generation transmits to generation what it has inherited from the past and won by its own exertions. The notion of progress is apprehended by him with a fulness as well as clearness which will be sought in vain in Bodin, Bacon, Pascal, or any other predecessor. In him what we find is no longer a simple affirmation or general view, the identification of progress with the advance of knowledge, or with anything which can be predicated merely of specially favoured nations or privileged classes, but it is a something which embraces all space and time, which includes all the elements of life, and in which the race as such is

meant to participate. The progress of humanity means, according to Turgot, the gradual evolution and elevation of man's nature as a whole, the enlightenment of his intelligence, the expansion and purification of his feelings, the amelioration of his worldly lot, and, in a word, the spread of truth, virtue, liberty, and comfort, more and more among all classes of men. He seeks to prove from the whole history of the past, that there has been such progress; and he professes his belief that there will be such progress in the future, on the ground that mankind seems to him like an immense army directed in all its movements by a vast genius, who alone sees the end towards which these movements advance and converge. As a picture of universal history taken from this high and hopeful point of view, his second discourse is so admirable that it is not likely to be surpassed by any composition on the same scale.

Turgot formed the design of giving full expression to his thought by writing an elaborate work on universal history, or, if time should be wanting for that, on the progress and vicissitudes of the arts and sciences. His duties, first, as administrator of a province, and afterwards as finance minister of the nation, prevented the realisation of this intention; but the sketches and notes committed by him to paper in 1750, are sufficient to show us how he meant to carry it out. There can be no reasonable doubt that, even if the smaller, but especially if the larger scheme had been accomplished, the result would have been one of the grandest literary and philosophical productions of the eighteenth century,—a work nobly planned and richly stored with facts and truths. If the philosophy of history be merely a scientific representation of universal history as a process of progressive development, Turgot has probably a better claim than any one else to be called its founder. Perhaps this was all that Cousin meant when he so designated him.

This, then, was the great service of Turgot to the philosophy of history, that he definitively showed history to be no mere aggregate of names, dates, and deeds, brought together and determined either accidentally or externally, but an organic whole with an internal plan progressively realised by internal forces. He so apprehended and proved this truth that it may

fairly be called, so far at least as French authors are concerned, his conquest, his contribution to historical science.

The mere conception of progress was, when Turgot wrote, no longer novel. Yet it had become dim and inoperative in the minds even of the leading teachers of France; had been extruded by the inrush of the new ideas of liberty, fraternity, justice, and equality, and the expulsive power of the new affections to which these ideas gave rise. Hence in the writings of Voltaire, Montesquieu, and Diderot, it was conspicuous only by its absence, and in those of Rousseau was vehemently assailed. Turgot, however, not only restored it to honour, but so deepened, enlarged, and developed it, that it acquired with him a profundity, a comprehensiveness, and a consistency quite novel.

His view of social progress, I say, was profound. It was a deep glance into its nature as a process of self-development; as a process the successive phases of which were what they were, because man was so and so made and situated. He not merely saw the fact of progress, that physical and political causes greatly affected it, and that like every other process it might be referred to the will of the great First Cause; but he saw likewise how it was connected with the essential faculties of man, and the constitutive principles of society. No one before him had perceived with anything like the same clearness how the mental or spiritual movement in history underlies, originates, and pervades the outwardly visible movement. M. Martin, whose account of Turgot is in general excellent, errs greatly when he blames him "for regarding progress too much as the result of external phenomena, and not sufficiently as the manifestation of the internal energies of man." This charge is altogether inapplicable, as any one may easily convince himself by reading, for instance, the first portion of the 'Ébauche du Second Discours.'

As regards comprehensiveness, Turgot's view embraced all the elements of social life. Science, art, government, manners, morality, religion, were all held by him to be the subjects of historical progress, and consequently of historical philosophy. At the same time he was quite aware that none of these things are developed isolatedly, but that, on the contrary, the position of any one of them at any given time is closely related to that

of all the others, and that there is a perpetual reciprocity of influence between all the forces in the social organism, a constant action and reaction of social facts on one another. The entire 'Plan du Premier Discours' shows that he grasped as firmly and completely the truth of the consensus as of the sequence of social changes, and many of its paragraphs—as, *e.g.*, those descriptive of the hunting and pastoral states—are excellent delineations of what constitutes such a consensus.

His view is not more distinguished for comprehensiveness than for consistency. This can be in no way better brought out than by comparing it with that of Condorcet, to whom so much of the honour properly due to Turgot has been often awarded. Condorcet believed in progress and perfectibility as firmly and more enthusiastically than Turgot, but his inferiority as regards consistency is immense. Indeed his retrospect of the history of the race, and the prospect he deduces from it, are in manifest contradiction. For, while extolling the vast superiority of his own age over all those which had preceded it, and picturing a glorious future as at hand, he yet, under the influence of his philosophical and religious prejudices, sees only the evil side of the greatest ancient and medieval institutions, the Church, feudalism, and monarchy, for instance; and by attributing to them essentially obstructive and pernicious influences, renders the progress which he glorifies unintelligible, or, as Comte says, a perpetual miracle, an effect without a cause. No such charge can be brought against Turgot. With him, whatever superiority is ascribed to the present is exhibited as the result of a growth which has slowly and intermittingly but surely pervaded the institutions and ages of the past, and which has incorporated into its each succeeding stage what was true and good in the preceding, so as never to be in contradiction to itself.

Turgot did not represent history as a process either of uniform or uninterrupted progress. He fully acknowledged that there were periods of intellectual and moral decadence, and that the study of these periods, with a view to ascertain the causes of retrogression, was highly instructive. He did not regard such progress as he ascribed to history to imply that men are born with more genius or virtue in later than in earlier ages, or necessarily surpass their predecessors in every particular form

of excellence. "The primitive dispositions act equally in barbarous and cultured peoples; they are probably the same in all places and times. Genius is scattered among the human race much like gold in a mine. The more mineral you take up, the more metal you may collect. The more men there are, the more great men, or men capable of becoming great, there will be. The hazards of education and of events develop them or leave them buried in obscurity, or immolate them before their season like fruits beaten down by the winds. We must admit that if Corneille had been brought up in a village and had guided the plough all his life, or Racine had been born in Canada among the Hurons or in Europe during the eleventh century, neither of them would have displayed their genius. If Columbus and Newton had died at the age of fifteen, America would have been discovered perhaps only two centuries later, and we should have been still ignorant of the true system of the world. And if Virgil had perished in infancy we should have had no Virgil, for there are not two of them. Advances, although necessary, are intermingled with frequent decadences, owing to the events and revolutions which interrupt them. They are consequently different among different peoples." They are also, according to Turgot, different in different periods. He not merely saw in a general way that progress had not been a uniform process, but quite clearly that it was one which had varied in rate from age to age greatly, and yet not arbitrarily or inexplicably. Hence he made a distinct effort to account for variations of rate of movement in history. And it was, on the whole, a very successful effort. On no point relating to the course of history, indeed, has he given expression to more ingenious and suggestive observations. The larger portion of the 'Plan du second discours' might be quoted in proof.

While Turgot recognised that human nature was in all its elements the subject of progress, he also virtually assumed that the intellect was the dominant and directing principle in its development, and that, therefore, intellectual enlightenment is the ultimate and general criterion of progress. He did not discuss any of the objections which may be urged against the assumption. Yet he gave indications of not being wholly unconscious that there were facts at least apparently in some

measure inconsistent with it. He saw that enlightenment and virtue did not perfectly correspond ; and that the development of art could not be exactly co-ordinated with the development of science. He did not submit, however, the question as to how progress is to be appreciated and measured to any distinct investigation. It was, doubtless, only vaguely present to his mind.

Among the fragmentary papers of Turgot connected with the philosophy of history is the sketch of a 'Political Geography,' which shows that he had attained to a broader view of the relationship of human development to the features of the earth and to physical agencies in general than even Montesquieu. And he saw with perfect clearness not only that many of Montesquieu's inductions were premature and inadequate, but that there was a defect in the method by which he arrived at them. Hence he lays down as a principle to be followed in this order of researches that physical causes being indirect and secondary, or, in other words, causes which act in and through mental qualities, natural or acquired, ought not to be had recourse to until mental causes have been fully taken into account. The excellent criticism of Comte, in the fifth volume of the 'Philosophic Positive,' and in the fourth volume of the 'Politique Positive,' on this portion of Montesquieu's speculations, is only a more elaborate reproduction of that of Turgot, and is expressed in terms which show that it was directly suggested by that of Turgot.

There is among the many pregnant thoughts of Turgot one which was destined to have so singularly famous a history that it is necessary to state it in his own words. He says: "Before knowing the connection of physical facts with one another, nothing was more natural than to suppose that they were produced by beings, intelligent, invisible, and like to ourselves. Everything which happened without man's own intervention had its god, to which fear or hope caused a worship to be paid conformed to the respect accorded to powerful men,—the gods being only men more or less powerful and perfect in proportion as the age which originated them was more or less enlightened as to what constitutes the true perfections of humanity. But when philosophers perceived the absurdity of these fables,

without having attained to a real acquaintance with the history of nature, they fancifully accounted for phenomena by abstract expressions, by essences and faculties, which indeed explained nothing, but were reasoned from as if they were real existences. It was only very late that from observing the mechanical action of bodies on one another, other hypotheses were inferred, which mathematics could develop and experience verify." This is as explicit a statement as can well be imagined of what the world has heard so much about as Comte's law of the three states—viz., that each of our leading conceptions, each branch of our knowledge, passes successively through three different theoretical conditions, the theological, the metaphysical, and the positive; the mind, in the first, regarding phenomena as governed not by invariable laws of sequence, but by single and direct volitions of a superior being or beings; in the second, referring them not to such volitions but to realised abstractions, to occult qualities and essences; while in the final stage it ceases to interpose either supernatural agents or metaphysical entities between phenomena and their production, but, attending solely to the phenomena themselves, seeks simply to discover their relations of similitude and succession. There cannot be a doubt that as to the general conception of this fundamental principle of his system Comte has been anticipated by Turgot. It is possible that it may have occurred to his mind independently, but it is much more likely that it was suggested by the passage in Turgot. There is a good deal of internal evidence that Comte had not only read but carefully studied what Turgot had written on history. But be this as it may, certain it is that Comte did not originate the general conception of the three states. What he distinctively did was to lay it down as the fundamental law of historical development, to make it the basis of a most elaborate survey of the whole course of that development, and so to apply it to the explanation of a vast number of social facts. Those who believe it to be a true law will probably say that even thus stated the service rendered by Comte must be regarded as incomparably more important than that of Turgot, and that his claim to be a discoverer really remains intact, since he only discovers who proves. Nor against this have I any objection to make. It is necessary to be just to Turgot, but that is not

incompatible with justice nor even with generosity to Comte, whose able and laborious endeavour to verify the idea first conceived by Turgot must, by those who are most convinced of its failure, be admitted to have been at least singularly provocative of fruitful inquiry and discussion.

The notion of three successive stages of thought in the interpretation of nature originated, it will be observed, with a man to whom the true interests of religion were sacred, and to whom any irreligious application of it would have been abhorrent; and if Comte has given it an irreligious bearing, that is one no less certainly illegitimate than irreligious. Grant Comte's alleged law, Turgot's general conception, and grant to it even a rigid and absolute truthfulness to which it has probably no just pretensions, and even then, if it be confined not only to the five sciences which are all that Comte admits to be sciences, but allowed to hold true of all the psychological sciences as well, it must be perfectly innocuous, if it can be shown that metaphysics and theology are not co-ordinate, are not at all on a level with these positive or inductive sciences. It is not Comte's alleged law that is dangerous, but the dogmatic, arbitrary, unreasoned assertion which he has appended to it that five positive sciences comprehend all knowledge. Theology and metaphysics are not merely particular and passing stages of the positive sciences, whether these be physical or psychological sciences, but themselves sciences, each with an appropriate sphere of its own, the one underlying, and the other overlying, the positive sciences. To emancipate physical and psychological science from a theological and metaphysical condition is no less a service to theology and metaphysics than to physics and psychology. Every science must gain by being kept in its own place It is wrong to mix up either theological beliefs or metaphysical principles among the laws of the positive sciences. But we by no means do so when we hold that both physics and psychology presuppose metaphysics, and yield conclusions of which theology may avail itself, and that we can still look on the whole earth as made beautiful by the artist hand of the Creator, on science as the unveiling of His wisdom, and on history as the manifestation of His providence.

IV.

There were in both Montesquieu and Turgot a comprehensiveness of judgment, a candour of disposition, and a calmness of temperament which made them more than mere typical representatives of the age in which they lived. It was in a man who, although richly endowed with mental gifts, had certainly no more than his share of these qualities—in François-Marie Arouet, so celebrated under the name of Voltaire—that all its distinctive characteristics and tendencies found their completest embodiment and clearest expression.[1] With as much truth as Louis XIV. had said "L'État, c'est moi," might Voltaire have said, "Le Siècle, c'est moi." His influence during the fifty years of his literary activity was as great in France and throughout Europe as that of the monarch during his lengthened personal reign. He was as much the central and ruling personage in the movement destructive of absolutism, as the king had been in that of its development.

The estimate formed of Voltaire will accordingly always correspond to that formed of the eighteenth century itself. The extravagantly unjust way in which he was generally spoken of during the first thirty years of the present century was chiefly due to a fanatical hatred of all the ideas which were supposed to have led to the French Revolution, and has been disappearing since in proportion to the prevalence of a more correct

[1] The literature relative to Voltaire is enormous. He has been written about from all possible points of view. The best biography of him is that by Desnoiresterres, 'Voltaire et la Société française au XVIIIe siècle,' 7 vols., Paris, 1867-75. Extensive as it is, it is not too much so considering the place occupied and the influence exerted by the subject of it; and it is never tedious or filled up with irrelevant matter. Bungener's 'Voltaire et son Temps,' Arsène Houssaye's 'Le Roi Voltaire,' Pierson's 'Voltaire et ses Maîtres,' Strauss' 'Voltaire,' Morley's 'Voltaire,' and Hamley's 'Voltaire,' deserve to be specially mentioned. The views given of Voltaire's character and work in Hettner's Litteraturgeschichte, 2. Th., and in the histories of France or the French Revolution by H. Martin, J. Michelet, and L. Blanc, are interesting. The general philosophy of Voltaire has been treated of by E. Bersot, 'La Philosophie de Voltaire,' and A. Gerard, 'La Philosophie de Voltaire d'après la critique Allemande'; his knowledge of physical science by Du Bois-Reymond, 'Voltaire in seiner Beziehung zur Naturwissenschaft'; and his historical philosophy by Schlosser, Buckle, and Laurent. There is a 'Bibliographie des Œuvres de Voltaire,' in 4 vols., by G. Bengesco.

appreciation of them. He is still underestimated by those who believe these ideas to have been mere negations, of use only at the most for the destruction of evil. On the other hand, he was not only overestimated by the vast majority of his contemporaries, but is so even now by those who do not perceive that although the truths for which he contended were positive principles of belief and morality, which overthrew the old order of things only because they deserved to do so, and which have survived the Revolution, and entered deeply and permanently into the spirits of all the leading European nations, yet that they were also principles which required to be supplemented by, and subordinated to, others, and constituted by themselves an extremely one-sided standard of judgment and conduct.

The intellect of Voltaire was not original, profound, or impartial, but it was extraordinarily energetic, versatile, and dexterous. He had neither philosophical nor poetical genius, but he had incomparable talent, and easily excelled in all varieties of literature. His activity was prodigious. He captivated courtly and refined society by the wit and brilliancy of his conversation. He was an indefatigable correspondent, and in no capacity appeared to more advantage or exercised more influence. His publications appeared in rapid succession, were of the most manifold kinds, and yet rarely failed to produce the impression which their author desired. He was at once formidable in argument and terrible in raillery, and was often in passionate and deadly earnest when simulating indifference or mirth. With light weapons he could inflict serious or fatal wounds. He was intensely practical. To judge of him simply as a literary man is as erroneous as it would be so to judge of Luther. He was primarily a reformer, a revolutionist, a man at war with the established order of things, and determined to bring about radical changes in the principles and conduct of society. The chief aim of his life was to free human thought from what he regarded as slavery, superstition, and folly; to spread what he believed to be freedom, enlightenment, and reason; to assail dogmatism and persecution, injustice and inhumanity, and to make them by all effective means the objects of hatred and contempt; and, in particular, to crush the great

enemy of mankind, the Church, "l'Infâme." To accomplish his purpose he not only schemed and struggled himself, but he also, and with consummate audacity and skill, directed the operations of a league of conspirators and an army of combatants of like mind and spirit. His success was vast. He made Europe largely Voltairian, and such it remains in no slight measure even to this day.

He is entitled to have the highest place assigned him among those historians of his age and country who wrote for the instruction of the general public. In his best efforts he surpassed them all, alike as regards style, research, and insight. He narrated with ease, alertness, and force. He had a vast and intelligent curiosity, and could submit to severe labour in order to gratify it. He had a clear vision to a certain depth, a naturally truthful judgment within a certain range. No one could dispose and present his matter so attractively. Some of his historical compositions, indeed, were hasty and unsatisfactory compositions, meant merely to serve some temporary purpose, and then to pass into kindly oblivion. These were, however, no measure of his talent, and need not be taken into account in our estimate of him.

His 'Charles XII.' (1731) was a brilliant instance of descriptive history. It necessarily involved a very considerable amount of original investigation, as it required to be drawn almost wholly from unpublished sources. The view which it gave of the character and career of the Swedish monarch is extremely vivid, and has not, it seems, been shown to be inaccurate in any essential respects. The narrative style of Voltaire is seen at its best in such pictures as those of the retreat of Schulembourg and of the battle of Pultawa.

The 'Siècle de Louis XIV' (1752) is a work of much greater intrinsic value. Its subject is not a man but an age, not a heroic fool but a great and eventful epoch. Its plan has often been censured as lacking unity, and as not answering to the strict requirements of historical composition. But if Voltaire erred at all in not confining himself to a single comprehensive and uninterrupted narration, it was because he believed that by such limitation he would have ruined his work. To give a series of pictures of the various phases of the civilisation

which characterised the age of Louis XIV. was an essential part of the plan which he conceived to be the most appropriate. The civilisation of that epoch was what chiefly interested himself, and to exhibit it in all its general aspects was his chief concern. Could he have so exhibited it as well as he did, if he had followed another method than the one which he actually pursued? It is far from obvious that he could. He gave at least full justice to the king, while he did not conceal the more serious of his political faults. He described the military exploits of the age with spirit, and yet did not assign to them too large a place or undue importance. He dwelt with sympathetic appreciation and patriotic pride on the advances made during the period in literature, art, science, and social refinement.

His 'Essai sur les Mœurs et l'Esprit des Nations' has, however, far stronger claims on our attention. This great work was planned and written for Madame de Châtelet about 1740, although only published in 1756. It had for object to trace the growth of national manners, the progress of society, the development of the human mind, from Charlemagne to Louis XIII. The merits of its general conception or organising thought are amply sufficient to atone for not a few failures in execution; and that thought being to a considerable extent original as well as true, its merits must in justice be ascribed to Voltaire himself.

Bossuet had preceded him in looking on the succession of events and ages as rationally connected, but he sought the principle of connection in the purposes of the Divine Will, and so passed at once from the domain of history into that of theology, whereas Voltaire, on the contrary, concentrated his attention on man, not on Providence—on the secondary, not the primary cause — striving to find the explanations of events in the opinions and feelings of men themselves, in the forces discoverable by analysis and induction, without rising above, or in any way going beyond, history proper. So far from being essentially contradictory, these two aspects of history are mutually complemental,—both being true in themselves, and false only when exaggerated into antagonism to each other; still they are different, and that on which Voltaire insists is

undoubtedly that to which the science of history must confine itself in the rigid and exclusive exercise of its peculiar and distinctive function.

The design of Voltaire is no less distinct from that of Montesquieu both in the 'Grandeur et Décadence des Romains' and in the 'Esprit des Lois.' In the former of these works Montesquieu seeks merely to establish, if we may so speak, two definite historical theses, or at least to solve two definite historical problems by exhibiting first the causes which accounted for the marvellous success of Rome, and then those which undermined and destroyed her strength and life. In the latter he examines merely a particular class of historical phenomena—viz., the various kinds of laws—in all lights, with a view to compass if possible a complete explanation of them. Both of these aims are essentially different from the task which Voltaire proposed to himself, that of writing the history of the human mind and of human society during almost nine centuries.

The work of Voltaire is also very different in character from that of Turgot. The latter, as we have seen, is merely a sketch; the former is a completed production. The distinction between them is the important one between plan and realisation, between discourse on history and history, between the abstract and the concrete. Besides, what Voltaire accomplished was not precisely that which Turgot planned. It was something less and lower, but also something more his own. Turgot sketched a scheme of universal history regarded as a progressive development of human nature, as the gradual advancement of mankind in knowledge and virtue, in happiness and power. The plan he traced proceeded from and was pervaded by a single all-inclusive and all-dominant philosophical idea, that of a continuous movement towards perfection in accordance with internal natural law. Voltaire wrote a general history mainly in order to trace the course of civilisation, the origins and manifestations of culture, the ways in which peoples had passed from ignorance and rusticity to enlightenment and refinement; but he did so without reference to any philosophical idea, and without representing history as subject to any law, internal or external, natural or providential. While

he treated of what he deemed progress largely and with all the enthusiasm of which he was capable, he regarded it as merely an accident, a happy but wholly contingent incident, in history. He has repeatedly expressed himself as if there were no law in human affairs, as if history were the domain of "Sa Majesté le Hasard."

While Voltaire gave to the greatest of his historical works the modest title of 'Essai,' to one of slight character and little merit he assigned the magnificent designation of 'La Philosophie de l'Histoire.' It was first published by him in 1765 as the production of "the late Abbé Bazin," and afterwards prefixed to the 'Essai' as an introduction, so that it may now be regarded as a part of it. Apparently Voltaire was the first to employ the expression "philosophy of history," but he so used it as to show that he had no worthy conception of what has a claim to the designation. He has not explained or defined what he meant by "philosophy of history," and consequently, we are left to gather his meaning from an examination of his so-called 'Philosophy of History.' A glance through the series of brief and loosely connected chapters of which the work consists, speedily shows us at least what he did not mean by it. It immediately discloses that he had no conception of the philosophy of history as an essential and organic part of a philosophical system, or as a study of the laws and course of development of the human spirit, or as an exhibition of the rationality of history; and, in a word, that he used the designation in a quite different way from that in which it has come to be employed in the nineteenth century. It is not, perhaps, quite so easy to determine precisely what he did mean by it. Yet I think we may with confidence hold that it was simply the study of history "en philosophe," as a philosopher should study it, the term philosopher being understood in its popular eighteenth-century sense,—the sense in which Voltaire and all the freethinkers of his age claimed to be philosophers. In fact, the philosophy of history, according to Voltaire, is neither more nor less than the treatment of history in the spirit and by the light of the Aufklärung. It presupposes no positive system of thought, and may lead to none. It is only a mode of viewing history, and one even which is mainly

negative. It consists in avoiding credulousness, exposing superstition, rejecting the myths and legends with which the histories of all peoples are disfigured, refusing credence to all accounts of miracles and all pretensions to inspiration, and sifting testimony in a strictly critical manner. It is a part of the polemic against positive religion, and of the apologetic for enlightenment.

Understood as now indicated, the title 'Philosophy of History' is not inappropriate to the work to which it is assigned. Voltaire begins this work by indicating some of the great changes which have taken place on the earth's surface, and then proceeds to remark on the different races of mankind, and on the antiquity of nations. He holds races to have been entirely distinct, the primitive condition of men to have been brutal, and the formation of societies and languages to have been slow. At the same time, he affirms the natural rationality, sociability, and perfectibility of our species. Man lived for a long time without speech, but he has never lived in isolation, nor has he ever been devoid of pity and justice, which are the foundations of society. "God has given us a principle of universal reason, as He has given feathers to birds and fur to bears." Voltaire proceeds to dwell on the difficulty with which primitive men have formed spiritual and metaphysical conceptions. His views as to the origin and causes of religion are much the same as those which are now prevalent among anthropologists. He assigns great importance in this connection to dreams. He describes how small peoples had each at first its own particular gods, its local tutelary deities; how they afterwards came to borrow and naturalise each other's gods; how at a still later period the apotheosis of great men was introduced; how at length sages rose to the belief in One God; and how priests have corrupted religion by the invention of theologies. He tries to indicate the distinctive features of civilisation in those ancient nations in whose records and remains it can first be distinctly studied. In delineating the characters and creeds of these nations he warmly eulogises the Chinese, and is fair toward the Hindus, Babylonians, Persians, and Egyptians, but shows neither justice nor mercy towards the Jews. He enumerates the massacres and other enormities

which they committed; portrays them as "execrable brigands, always superstitious, always barbarous, abject in misfortune, and insolent in prosperity;" and sneers at the notion that they have been "the sacred instruments of divine vengeance and of the future salvation of the human race." He pours out all the vials of his wrath on Moses and the prophets, the Bible and miracles. The Jews may be entitled, he thinks, to a place in theology, but they are entitled to none in history. And history ought to be separated from theology, and treated as a something entirely natural and self-explanatory.

What Voltaire sought to accomplish in his 'Essai sur les Mœurs' has been already indicated. His design cannot be justly denied the merit of originality. It was essentially different from what Bossuet, Vico, or Montesquieu had aimed at. If more like the plan of Turgot, it was yet considerably different from it. And it has to be remembered that although Voltaire's work appeared after those of Montesquieu and Turgot, it had been not only conceived but largely composed long before. He had it for twenty years under his hands, as it was in great part written for Madame du Châtelet in 1740, *i.e.*, seventeen years previous to its publication, eight years previous to the appearance of Montesquieu's 'Esprit des Lois,' and ten years before the delivery of Turgot's 'Discours' at the Sorbonne. To understand the attraction and influence which it exercised on its first readers, it is necessary to bear in mind its novelty of plan and freshness of treatment. It owes to them also in a great measure its place and significance in the history of thought and literature. Voltaire was the first to write a general history in which the *esprit* and *mœurs* of nations were throughout regarded as of more importance than their outward fortunes and actions. A host of writers,—French, Italian, English, and German,—have followed his example, and some of them may have gone much farther than he did along the path which he opened up; still he was the initiator and they have only been the continuators.

In the working out of his design Voltaire must, I think, be admitted to have rendered most important services both to the art and science of history. The greatest undoubtedly was that he applied his judgment freely and independently to an order

of facts which had previously been left almost untouched by critical thought; that, devoid of learned credulity, and unawed by traditional authority, he dared to demand of all that passed for historical both what evidence there was that it had ever taken place, and what was the worth of it supposing it had; and that he was not deterred by the mere circumstance of its having been accepted by an unbroken succession of historians from expressing his conviction that it had never occurred, or that although it had occurred, it was not worth recording in the history of a nation, and still less in the history of humanity. He brought such light as there was in the so-called philosophy of his time directly to bear on the past; and although that was neither a full nor a pure light, it sufficed to break through, and in great measure to dispel, the brooding and chaotic night of credulity, dogmatism, and absurdity in which history lay shrouded.

Voltaire has not the slightest claim, indeed, to be regarded as the first to subject the materials of history to a free criticism. Vico, Perizonius, Simon, Bayle, Freret, De Pouilly, Beaufort, and others, had preceded him. Owing, however, either to something in the matter or method of their researches, or in the form and style in which they presented the results of their investigations, their influence in diffusing a critical spirit into the study of general history was small in comparison with that which he exercised. That his criticism was often not supported by what the best historians of the present day would consider an adequate scholarship must be admitted. The standard of requirement has in that respect greatly risen since he wrote. But it has risen through the spread of the spirit which he did so much to introduce into historical research; and every candid and competent student of his writings will admit that as to the whole period of time embraced in his 'Essai,' and, indeed, as to all periods which could be studied without a knowledge of Greek and the oriental languages, his learning was for the age not only great, but rested to an exceptional extent on original authorities, and not on second-hand statements.

Notwithstanding all that had been done by his predecessors, it was left to Voltaire to apply the critical spirit to history on a scale and in a form universally interesting, to diffuse it

through the popular mind, and to discredit effectually and finally the blind credulity with which historical writers had been accustomed to receive whatever had been recorded. This, —the necessary preparation of all the deeper and more enlarged views of the historian's work and duties which now prevail,— he most successfully accomplished, partly by his unrivalled wit and worldly wisdom, and partly by independent research, by really going back to the primary witnesses, and freely testing the special and general reasons for the acceptance or rejection of their evidence.

The historian has to decide on the worth and significance of facts no less than on the evidence for the reality and circumstances of their occurrence, and Voltaire showed his independence of judgment in the former no less than in the latter respect. He did more than any one else to rescue history from the purblind pedants who confounded it with an unreflective and chaotic compilation of facts, and more than any one else to show that it had better work than to dwell in courts and camps, and to describe chiefly intrigues and battles. Perfect in the use both of ridicule and argument, he jeered and reasoned the dull story-telling race as nearly out of existence as indulgent nature would permit. He insisted on the duty of the judicious choice of facts, and exemplified the advantages of attention to it. He showed, both by precept and practice, that the aim of the historian's labours was to trace the growth of national life and character, and that the end should determine the relative importance assigned to events; and he succeeded in impressing the lesson on the European mind better than any other man could have done. The value of this service should not be denied or depreciated because his judgment was not always just, or because he did not always estimate the importance and bearing of events without bias. The independence of his judgment was a merit even where unaccompanied by the still higher merit of truth.

He is not to be ranked among historical sceptics. He neither advocated any general theory of historical scepticism, nor even any of the distinctive principles of such a theory. Indeed, he has nowhere discussed questions as to the rules of historical research, or as to the validity or limits of historical knowledge.

His essay, entitled 'Pyrrhonisme de l'histoire,' is occupied with special not general questions, with questions of fact, not of theory. It is simply an attempt to show that historians have displayed an excessive credulity on a variety of points of ancient and modern history, and have decided without or contrary to evidence.

Michelet considers what he calls *le sens humain*, manifested in the 'Essai sur les Mœurs' to be its most marked characteristic. He means that while Voltaire treats external agencies, social customs, and positive institutions as only of secondary and subordinate importance in history, he recognises the universal properties of human nature itself, and especially justice and pity, to be primary and fundamental. It must be admitted that this is true; but it must also be acknowledged that his conception of human nature was mean, and that if he had more humanitarian feeling than was common among the writers of the age of Louis XIV., he had less of it than was generally to be found among those of the latter part of the eighteenth century, and than has become almost universally diffused in the present day. While he had a heart ready to revolt and protest against injustice and cruelty when they came before him in distinct forms and special instances, he was only moderately endowed with the love of man as man, or with love of the class the most numerous and poor. He believed neither in the unity of origin of the human species nor in the equality of human races. He was full of aristocratic contempt for ordinary mankind. The vast majority of men he held had been in all ages weak and credulous fools, deservedly the dupes and slaves of the intelligent and resolute. The ruling minority he deemed to have consisted mostly of the selfish and unscrupulous. Human sympathy often displays its presence in the 'Essai'; but not more frequently than human pride and disdain, shown in the conviction and feeling that humanity is, and has always been, almost entirely composed of a rabble multitude and a rascally few, *la canaille et les fripons*.

Voltaire's appreciation of civilisation was likewise at once very sincere so far as it went and yet very defective. He had a genuine enthusiasm for culture of a kind; a keen sense of the worth of science, art, literature, and social refinement. But

for such enthusiasm and susceptibility he would never have formed the design of tracing the stages through which European society had passed from barbarism to civilisation. They supplied the inspiration of what is best in his work; they account for the superiority of its later to its earlier volumes, and for the spirit and the brightness of the descriptions of the advances achieved during the Renaissance, and under Charles V., Henry IV., and Richelieu. But his idea of civilisation itself was most imperfect. It excluded all earnest religious faith, and included nothing higher than intellectual cleverness, moral respectability, and polished manners. It was not the idea of a civilisation appropriative of all that is human, comprehensive of all that educates mental and spiritual life, and which while it should refine and discipline nature should likewise preserve its simplicity, respect its freedom, and favour individual and national originality; but rather that of a civilisation of a special and artificial type, such as can only be local and temporary, and as was to be seen in all its glory in the fashionable *salons* and philosophic circles of Paris in the Voltairian period. Civilisation, in fact, was conceived of by Voltaire and the generality of his contemporaries in a way which goes far to explain how Rousseau should have maintained that civilisation was a curse instead of a blessing, and had been the destruction of the innocence and happiness of the human race, and why he should have found so many to agree with him.

One of Voltaire's chief disqualifications as an historian was his incapacity to appreciate with sympathy and fairness religious phenomena. It is not to be denied that he saw clearly and accurately some of the causes of the origination and spread of religion, and some of the influences which have moulded its forms; but this did not prevent his lamentably failing to do justice to religion and its forms, even regarded simply as historical facts and forces. He was naturally prone to be bitter, unmeasured, and unscrupulous in his enmities, and actually was all these in his enmity to positive religion. His fanatical hatred of it had, as it could not but have, the most disastrous effect on his character even as an historian, which is the only respect in which I am here regarding him. It pre-

vented his attaining to any correct understanding, or truly philosophic view, of the deeper spirit of history.

All doctrines in which men had tried to express their sense of the Divine in things, all rites seemingly strange and *bizarre* springing from the same root, and, in a word, all manifestations of religious faith and sentiment which were not in conformity with his narrow prejudiced rationalism and unsteady abstract deism, he was always ready to pronounce ridiculous absurdities, gross impostures, wicked lies of ambitious priests and rulers, and to assume that when once this was done his business with them was accomplished. This fault may be so far excused inasmuch as Voltaire, although marvellously qualified to be the exponent of the spirit of his age, possessed no exceptional strength to resist it or to rise above it; yet none the less it was an enormous defect. Religion is in scarcely any of its forms so wholly false as he supposed, so entirely either invention or illusion. And even were it so, the historian's task as regards religion, far from being finished when he has declared any religious system false, cannot be reasonably considered to have been then even begun. It is no part at all of the historian's proper work to judge of the truth or falsity of any religion; it is for the religious apologist or polemic, for the religious evidentialist or controversialist, to do that. The historian in dealing with religion is only required impartially and accurately to show how its various forms and institutions, doctrines and rites, have attained historical realisation; how they have influenced the intellects and the characters of individuals and generations; how they have affected and modified the lives of societies and the destinies of nations; and how they have contributed to the development of morality, policy, art, science, and philosophy. Instead of doing this, Voltaire occupied himself throughout his 'Essai' in assaulting positive religions as corruptions of natural religion, and in seeking to find in history the means of discrediting them.

He was especially embittered against Christianity. Hence, whereas Bossuet had sought to make the Christian Church the centre of all history and the source of all that is good in history, he endeavoured to turn all history into a polemic against it, and represented it as the chief source of the evils of the

ages through which it had passed,—a much falser position still, and one more incompatible with a sound comprehension of the nature and course of the historical movement. He has treated Mohammedanism with more favour than Christianity, and has represented Confucianism as superior to them both. The care with which he showed that the great heathen nations of Asia had attained to no inconsiderable height of speculative knowledge was almost as much owing to his dislike of the Christian faith as to his love of truth. He saw little else than decadence in the centuries of transition from Roman paganism to medieval Christendom. He was a harsh judge of the middle ages,—those of faith and of an undivided and all-powerful Church. He was as indulgent, however, towards the Church as represented by Leo X. and his cardinals, as he was intolerant towards her as reformed by Luther, Calvin, and their associates.

Voltaire failed to recognise clearly in history a comprehensive plan, a pervasive order, such as implies a Divine will operating through human wills, a first cause working through secondary causes. Blindness in this regard makes itself felt in his whole treatment of the subject, and gives to his book, notwithstanding conspicuous excellences, a certain character of meanness which cannot well be described, but which produces a sad and disheartening impression. The defect is to some extent an inconsistency; for among the few principles to which he clung with anything like steadiness, was belief in an almighty and righteous God, and why he should have practically denied that history presents any evidence of His power and justice is not at first apparent. Yet it was a natural result of the unworthy conception he had formed of Christianity, and of his consequent want of sympathy with the spiritual life of the past, and even hostility to the past as a whole. He could paint vividly and truly certain aspects of the middle ages; but he could not possibly, his own spirit being what it was, understand its real spirit. His quick, versatile, widely read, and susceptible mind caught many glimpses of historical truth, but could not attain to a steady perception of the rationality of the historical development in its entirety. As his antireligious prejudices blinded him to the power and operation

of the higher forces of history, he had to seek the explanation of it exclusively in its own lower forces. Hence his inability to trace the outlines of a general plan in history. Hence his representation of human nature as a far meaner thing than it is. Hence his ascription to small causes and accidental circumstances, of a far greater power over the lives of nations than they exert. Hence his exhibition of superstitions, irrational habits, mere brute violence as the great ministers of destiny, the chief moving forces of history, which thus appears as a badly composed drama, half tragedy and half farce, a burlesque of a sacred subject, partly hateful and partly ridiculous. Hence the essential truth of these words of Carlyle: "'The Divine Idea, that which lies at the bottom of Appearance,' was never more invisible to any man. History is for him not a mighty drama enacted on the theatre of Infinitude, with Suns for lamps, and Eternity as a background; whose author is God, and whose purport and thousandfold moral lead us up to the 'dark excess of light' of the Throne of God; but a poor wearisome debating-club dispute, spun through ten centuries, between the Encyclopédie and the Sorbonne."[1]

There is, in fact, in Voltaire's 'Essai' a decided want of philosophy. Keen, clear, boundlessly clever as it shows its author to have been, there is little trace in it of the caution and comprehensiveness of judgment, the patient and methodical verification of opinions, the catholicity of feeling, and control over temper, which all philosophy demands, and the philosophy of history more perhaps than any other kind of philosophy. He got much deeper into his subject than the historical compilers against whom he waged war; but he did not get near to the heart of it, nor attain a rational comprehension of it.

Of all his prose works, the 'Essai' is the most remarkable and the most valuable. It has had a great influence on the development of historical literature, and will always have a distinctive place assigned to it in every impartial survey of that literature. It shows us, perhaps, more completely than any of his other writings, at once the strength and the weakness of his intellect when fully exerted on a magnificent

[1] Essays, vol. ii. p. 135 (ed. 1872).

theme. After studying that intellect as there exhibited, it seems to me impossible to characterise it with more accuracy and force than Carlyle has already done in these few words: "Let him [Voltaire] but cast his eye over any subject, in a moment he sees, though indeed only to a short depth, yet with instinctive decision, where the main bearings of it for that short depth lie; what is, or appears to be, its logical coherence; how causes connect themselves with effects; how the whole is to be seized, and in lucid sequence represented to his own or to other minds. But below the short depth alluded to, his view does not properly grow dim, but altogether terminates: thus there is nothing further to occasion him misgivings; has he not already sounded into that basis of boundless darkness on which all things firmly rest? What lies below is delusion, imagination, some form of superstition or folly, which he, nothing doubting, altogether casts away."[1]

[1] Essays, vol. ii. p. 164.

CHAPTER IV.

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY CONTINUED: ROUSSEAU TO CONDORCET.

I.

THE great and momentous change in the spirit and temper of the French people which made itself outwardly manifest immediately after the death of Louis XIV., became always more thorough and complete until the Revolution, which had been long foreseen and often foretold, at length broke forth. In the writings of Voltaire, Montesquieu, and Turgot, it showed itself in a stage already far advanced, yet in one still essentially moderate and reasonable. As time passed on, however, and as the degeneracy of the ruling classes and the effeteness of the old methods of government became always more keenly felt, dangerous passions also became always increasingly inflamed, extreme and one-sided views more prevalent, hatred to authority intensified, and utopian theories more credulously accepted.

The old order of society could not endure. The only question was, How was it to give place to another? Was it to be through the action of the monarch or of the people? I see no reason for believing that it might not have been brought about in the former way; that the Revolution in the form which it actually assumed was inevitable even at the accession of Louis XVI. Had the ruler then given to France been not that weak well-meaning monarch, but a clear-sighted and resolute reforming king; a man with the intellect and will of a Cromwell or of a Frederick the Great; one who would have kept his wife and courtiers in their proper places; who would

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have seen to the discipline, and made sure of the loyalty of his army; who would have steadfastly supported his Turgots and other like-minded ministers and administrators; who would have called to such work as was most conducive to their country's good the ablest of the men of talent at that time abounding in France, instead of leaving them to declaim about tyrants and priests, the sovereignty of the people and the rights of men; who would have removed the burdens under which the peasantry groaned, withdrawn unnatural restrictions on individual energy, and abolished unjust and offensive distinctions and privileges: had such a man succeeded to the throne of France when Louis XVI. did, there would have been no French Revolution like that which actually happened, no taking of the Bastille or "night of spurs," no September massacres or Reign of Terror, and yet all the principles and strivings which led to the Revolution might have been as fully realised. The Revolution may have no more added to the power or influence of the stream of thought and tendency which pervaded and characterised the eighteenth century than the cataracts of Niagara increase the force or volume of the St Lawrence.

When under Louis XVI. the incompetence of the monarchy to accomplish the work of social and political reform which was manifestly indispensable had become apparent to all, the representatives of the people easily seized the reins of power. They eagerly undertook to achieve what the sovereign had failed to effect. But their divisions, their jealousies, their unfamiliarity with governmental practice, their want of appropriate administrative machinery, the vagueness of their theories and schemes, the extravagance of their expectations, and the chaotic excitement of the public mind, made orderly and peaceable reform impossible, fierce struggles and violent measures inevitable. Hence the Revolution. With that event the ideas and passions which had produced it were set free by it to assume even the strangest and most exaggerated forms, and to attempt even the most fantastic and the most hideous applications. The minds of men were agitated to the utmost. They were tossed between the extremes of love and hate, hope and despair, as they have never been since, and as they had

not been for more than two centuries before. The fountains of emotion in the human heart were laid bare as if by an earthquake.

The historical literature of the latter portion of the eighteenth century was deeply influenced by the then prevailing state of public opinion and feeling. Indeed, it was affected by it to an extent most injurious to its character both as history and literature. Not one good popular history was produced during the whole period. Impartiality, self-restraint, self-forgetfulness, strict truthfulness, objectivity, and, in a word, all the primary historical virtues, nearly disappeared. Argument and declamation usurped the places of narration and the disclosure of causation and development. Instead of faithfully delineating the movement and incidents of history, and leaving it to suggest its own lessons, the writers who professed to be historians presented history only so far as they could make it seem to testify to the truth of views in the service of which their passions were enlisted. The great bulk of the so-called historical literature of the period was, consequently, of a controversial and oratorical nature; and large so-called histories were often only bulky political pamphlets. We have here to do with such literature merely in so far as it bears on the development of historical theory.

The influence exerted by Rousseau was, perhaps, not inferior to that of Voltaire. Although it spread less widely, it penetrated more deeply; although it acted on opinions with less direct effectiveness, it impressed the imagination and feelings more powerfully. Voltaire was a man of marvellously quick and clear understanding; of many and varied talents always at their possessor's command; of restless intellectual curiosity and rapid literary productiveness; of liveliest interest in art and science, culture, and refinement; of aristocratic feelings and manners; of shrewdest worldly tact and the most brilliant social qualities. Rousseau was a man of great, although morbid, genius; of brooding imagination and passionate heart; of seductive and overpowering eloquence; a skilful and often sophistical dialectician; susceptible to high ideals and divine inspirations, but also easily overcome by mean temptations and sensuous lusts; unsociable and jealous by temperament, while inordinately eager for noto-

riety and praise; plebeian in his tastes and habits; richly endowed with the feeling for nature. Both were the sons of their age, but Voltaire inherited its more general characteristics, and Rousseau such as were less common. Hence the latter is often erroneously regarded as having been a man of greater independence and originality of thought, and less imbued with the spirit of his time. In reality, there was little substantial novelty in his teaching, and even when he opposed certain tendencies of the age, it was in the spirit of the age. Had he been more original he would have been less influential.

He was not, as Voltaire was, an eminent historian; he was not an historian at all, and had little accurate historical knowledge. Plutarch's 'Lives' had profoundly impressed him, and he had loosely read a number of historical books; but he knew no portion of history well, nor apprehended truthfully the spirit of any single people or epoch. His admiration of Athens, Sparta, and Rome was an ignorant admiration; his aversion to the middle ages and to modern institutions a not less ignorant aversion. Yet his literary genius, favoured by prevailing tendencies, caused the most worthless of his historical judgments to be received by multitudes of his contemporaries as oracles revealing the truth and significance of history, and thus gave them an importance to which they were far from entitled in themselves.

It was chiefly, however, by his eloquent advocacy of certain historical hypotheses that he stimulated historical speculation. To these we must now briefly refer.

His literary career began with a 'Discours sur la question: Le progrès des sciences et des arts a-t-il contribué à corrompre ou à épurer les mœurs?' (1750), to which the Academy of Dijon had awarded the prize which it had offered for the best discussion of the question: "Le réetablissement des lettres et des arts a-t-il contribué à corrompre ou à épurer les mœurs?" Rousseau, in answer to the question stated by himself, affirms that the sciences and arts had depraved the morals and manners of mankind. He argues that they had originated with the birth, and grown with the growth, of human vices. He represents the researches of science as unsuited to the nature of the human intellect and as leading to conclusions which yield no

true satisfaction to the human heart; indicates how the arts minister to vanity and luxury, and contribute to corrupt society and ruin nations; and dwells on the mischievous effects of immoral and irreligious writings. He vaunts the virtue of the primitive ages in which ignorance and simplicity prevailed, and draws gloomy and satirical pictures of the moral condition of the periods in which literature and culture have flourished. Most of what he says in support of his thesis is true, but his thesis itself is not true. Such semblance of being a proof of it as the Discourse possesses, is due entirely to its one-sidedness. Rousseau refers exclusively to the abuses of the arts and sciences, and assumes that there was nothing else respecting them to which he ought to refer. Few men have been more liberally endowed with the power of the myopic vision characteristic of sincere and successful advocates of paradoxes.

The 'Discours sur l'origine et les fondements de l'inégalité parmi les hommes' (1754) is a much abler production. It generalises and develops the thesis maintained in the first Discourse; and, consequently, attacks civilisation in general as the cause of human misery and corruption, and represents history as having been a process not of amelioration but of deterioration.

It denies that man is corrupt by nature; it affirms that he is good by nature, and has been corrupted by society. Readers of Rousseau's 'Emile' are aware that this dogma of the natural goodness of man is the corner-stone of the theory of education therein expounded; it holds the same place in the theory of the rise and development of inequality given in the work under consideration. The state of man as a primitive savage is represented as having been better than his state in any period of culture. It was the state most conformed to his constitution, and one in which he would have done well to remain. He remained in it for ages, but not wholly without change. The state of nature had itself a certain development; it had epochs, or at least stages.

At first, men lived solitary, naked, speechless, without instruments, without religious or moral notions, impelled and guided only by their senses, instincts, and simplest bodily appetites. In this purely animal condition they were strong

and healthy, innocent and happy, without fictitious wants, and easily able to satisfy the few desires which they experienced. Civilised men have reason to look back to it with regret. Why, then, should primitive men have abandoned it? Rousseau has no explanation to give. He tells us, indeed, that "the specific characteristic which distinguishes man from the animal is a faculty of perfectibility almost unlimited;" but he is not so illogical as to attempt to account for continuous actual deterioration by the possibility of indefinite amelioration; and therefore, he does not condescend to explain at all how men were seduced to fall away from their estate of contented animality. He describes them, however, as in fact finding out such inventions as hooks for fishing, bows and arrows for hunting, and how to warm themselves by the aid of fire and to clothe themselves with skins.

Next, men are represented as gradually proceeding to form temporary associations for the sake of the benefits to be thereby attained. They are thus slowly led to invent language which is almost indispensable to association. It is, however, a marvellous invention; and Rousseau, far from attempting to explain it, candidly confesses that it seems to him inexplicable. "The invention of speech appears to require speech." Among the earliest manifestations of association are the construction of huts and the formation of family ties, or, in other words, the institution of private property and the establishment of domestic society; and these lead to a greater differentiation of the sexes and their occupations. Then, men group themselves into village communities; and not only natural differences manifest themselves, but inequalities of conditions appear, with love and jealousy and various disturbing and painful passions. Such is the general condition of savages at present; one by no means without drawbacks; and yet one superior to the ordinary lot of men in all stages of civilisation.

With the use of metals and the cultivation of the ground, the division of labour was developed and private property became a fixed and general institution. The result was "the civilisation of man and the destruction of the human race." With indignation Rousseau denounces the appropriation of

the earth and the bounties of nature as robbery of the race by the individual. "The land belongs to no one person, but to all; all that an individual acquires beyond subsistence is a social theft (*vol social*)." With sombre eloquence he describes the consequences flowing from this primary act of spoliation; how it divided society into rich and poor, oppressor and oppressed; how inequalities increased, how violence spread, and how the natural promptings of pity and the as yet feeble voice of justice were extinguished and silenced. The greatness of the evil at length caused the necessity for a remedy to be universally felt. This led, however, to no real improvement, for the rich and crafty were able to turn the desire to arrest the usurpations of the powerful and the brigandage of the disinherited to their own advantage. "They formed a project the most astute that ever entered the human spirit, by which to convert their adversaries into their defenders, to inspire them with wholly new maxims, and to introduce institutions which would be as favourable to them as natural law and the law of the strong were the contrary." It succeeded; and civilisation, society, and laws were instituted, "which gave new fetters to the feeble, and new forces to the rich; which destroyed beyond recovery natural liberty, fixed for ever the law of property and inequality, converted a clever usurpation into an irrevocable right, and, for the profit of a few ambitious men, subjected henceforth all the human race to servitude and misery."

The establishment of law and property required the institution of magistrates, and their authority, although at first only delegated, naturally became absolute. The growth of inequality and corruption was thereby favoured in all forms, and at last resulted in the despotism of one and the slavery of all the rest,—the extreme of inequality engendered by the excess of corruption. Instead of being compensations for the evils of civilisation, art, science, and literature are simply the gilding of the chains of that state of slavery and injustice to which the name of civilisation is given.

No quite consistent inference, perhaps, could have been drawn from Rousseau's teaching, seeing that it was not self-consistent; but the least inconsistent would have been the

differential tenet of the theory known as nihilism or anarchism. Rousseau affirmed the premisses of this system, and he should have drawn its conclusions. That is to say, he should have inculcated the suppression of property, the dissolution of the family, the obliteration of social distinctions, the abolition of all extant laws and resistance to the enactment of new ones, the overthrow of government and authority in every form, and, in a word, a return to primitive savagery. But, resolute dialectician although he was, he had not the courage to be thus consistent; he shrank from advocating mere social destruction, and even propounded a scheme of social reconstruction.

The scheme is delineated in his famous 'Contrat Social' (1762).[1] It is not only no legitimate sequel to its author's hypothesis of historical development, but is utterly unhistorical in character,—a product of conjecture, abstraction, and argumentation, all divorced from historical experience. The 'Contrat Social' is an essentially deductive and dogmatic work. Its central conception is borrowed from Hobbes, but differently applied, yet not intrinsically improved. Political Rousseauism may be said to be reversed but unamended Hobbism. Rousseau, like Hobbes, would organise society on the basis of a compact which makes the ruling will or sovereign authority indivisible, unlimited, and unconditioned; only whereas Hobbes would place the absolute sovereignty in an individual will, Rousseau would assign it to the collective will. The ideal delineated in Hobbes' 'Leviathan' is that of a monarchical despotism, and the ideal delineated in Rousseau's 'Social Contract' is that of a democratic despotism, both ideals being vitiated by the same error, the ascription of absolute sovereignty to human will.

[1] The Library of Geneva possesses a MS. of Rousseau which contains the primitive text of the 'Contrat Social,' and was written apparently between 1754 and 1756. It was printed in 1887 in a Russian work on Rousseau by M. Alexieff, and is interestingly commented on by M. Bertrand in a memoir published in the 'Compte Rendu of the Acad. of Mor. and Pol. Sciences,' July 1891. It appears to M. Bertrand to show that Rousseau at the date of its composition had become aware that his so-called "state of nature" had never really existed, but deemed that it might be usefully retained as a hypothetical and ideal antecedent of society. This view is very probable; but certainly the picture drawn of "the state of nature" in the text and notes of the Discourse on the Causes of Inequality is very unideal, and the notion that actual history can be truly or profitably represented as commencing with instead of tending towards an ideal is a self-contradictory and inconsiderate one.

While Rousseau does not prescribe communism or equality of wealth in his ideal commonwealth, he recommends that it should be, as far as possible, aimed at; and while he does not prohibit the holding of private property, he affirms that the community is entitled to dispose of the goods of all its members.

No writer of the eighteenth century contributed so much as Rousseau to diffuse the following beliefs: that human nature was originally, and is intrinsically, good; that science, art, and literature are essentially unfavourable to morality; that laws have been always and everywhere instituted for the oppression of the poor and weak; that private property is unjust, and has necessarily caused incalculable misery; that equality is of far more importance than liberty; that the history of civilisation has been a process of illusion, crime, and suffering, determined almost exclusively by the action of inexplicable accidents and of evil passions; that the basis of society in the future should be a contract in which an absolute sovereignty is vested in the community by the unlimited sacrifice of the independence of individuals; and that majorities, as the organs of the collective will, are entitled to punish, even with death, disobedience to any behests either as regards civil or religious matters which they see fit to enact and impose. By his advocacy of these and kindred tenets he profoundly affected social speculation and practice. How far his influence was good and how far it was evil, this is not the place to inquire. It was obviously both. It is not inaccurate to say of him, as Professor Graham has done, with reference to the very writings which have been under our consideration,—"the poor had found a powerful pleader, the dumb millions a voice, democracy its refounder, and humanity in the eighteenth century its typical representative man, who gave vent to its inmost sentiments, troubles, aspirations, and audacious spirit of revolt;"[1] but it is just as correct also to say that in him the poor had found a persuasive seducer, the dumb millions a voice which by the follies it uttered discredited what was reasonable in their claims, democracy a reconstructor so unwise as to choose for its cornerstone the very falsehood on which despotism rests, and humanity in the eighteenth century the great literary exponent of those

[1] Socialism New and Old, pp. 55, 56.

passions and errors which were "the seeds of the guillotine," the germs of the infamies of the Reign of Terror.[1]

The Abbé Morelly propounded views very similar to those of Rousseau, although on the whole even more radical and extreme, first in the 'Basiliade' (1753), and afterwards more systematically in the 'Code de la Nature' (1756), long erroneously attributed to Diderot. His social theories rest on a doctrine of materialistic egoism. Man, in his eyes, is simply a physical and sentient organism, whose sole end and *summum bonum* is pleasure. Human nature is in itself wholly innocent and good. "Morality implies no antagonism between the passions and duty, for the former are legitimate and sovereign, and would cause no harm if allowed free play; it is just by the irritation and restraint of the laws and institutions which pretend to have a right to confine and regulate them, that they are rendered corrupt and mischievous. The great social problem is to find a situation in which the passions will be fully gratified, while it will be almost impossible for men to be tempted or depraved. It can only be solved through the elimination of avarice, the only vice in the world, the universal pest of mankind, the slow fever or consumptive disease of society." And this can only be effected by the suppression of private property, by rendering the possession of all wealth indivisible and collective and the enjoyment of all products common, by the State regulation of marriage, and by the abolition of public and private worship.

[1] The chief general works on the life and writings of Rousseau are those of Musset-Pathay, Morin, Brackerhoff, Saint-Marc Girardin, and Morley. A good account of his religious, political, social, and educational opinions will be found in Emil Feuerlein's three articles—Rousseau'sche Studien—in the first and second volumes of the 'Gedanke.' Bluntschli, Barante, Janet, and others, have specially expounded his views on the origin of society, social contract, natural rights, &c.; and Bourgeand has treated of his religious teaching (J. J. Rousseau's Religionsphilosophie, 1883). Of exceptional interest are the following: 'J. J. Rousseau jugé par les Genevois d'aujourdhui' (Genève, 1879); 'Les origines des idées politiques de Rousseau,' par M. Jules Vuy (Genève, 1882); Baudrillard, 'J. J. Rousseau et le socialisme moderne' (in Études de philosophie morale, t. 1); Caro, 'Le fin d'un siècle,' t. 1, c. 3, 4; Renouvier's articles in 'Crit. Phil.,' année xiii.; and Prof. E. Caird's paper in 'Cont. Rev.' for Sept. 1877. Few have written regarding Rousseau with so much judgment and insight as F. C. Schlosser, 'Hist. of the Eighteenth Century,' vol. i. pp. 285-314, Eng. tr. Rousseau treats of history from an educational point of view in 'Emile,' iv. 1.

The view which Morelly gave of the place and functions of the passions in the social economy has a special claim to be remarked, owing to the use which was made of it by Fourier and his followers. Morelly was the direct and immediate precursor of Fourier, inasmuch as he laid the foundation-stone of Phalansterianism. But the system which he himself attempted to build on it was a very different one; it was a socialism of the kind which has become familiar to us in recent times as Collectivism. He is, perhaps, more entitled than any one else to be called the originator of the theory of modern Collectivism. A collectivist socialism was his ideal of the future of human society. As to the past, the course of actual history, he represented it as having been essentially a process of falsehood and cruelty, of folly and crime. He was, like so many of his contemporaries pessimist as to the past and optimist as to the future; that he was a social revolutionist followed naturally from his non-recognition of the continuity of history.[1]

The Abbé de Mably (1709-1785) was a man of a very different type of character than either Rousseau or Morelly, but in its general scope and direction his thinking had much in common with theirs. He was austere, independent, and disinterested; he cared little for pleasure, power, or fame; conscience was his stay and guide; he saw in virtue the chief source and primary condition of individual and social prosperity. None of his contemporaries insisted so strongly on the intimate relationship of morals and politics; the dependence of the latter on the former seemed to him the great lesson taught by history. He was not a believer in Christianity, but he had a steady faith in God and the moral law. Although in his earliest publication he appeared as the eulogist of absolute monarchy, he soon afterwards became an ardent admirer of the republican form of government, and he did much to spread and confirm republican predilections in France. His political views were mainly the results of his reflections on ancient history; the institutions of classical antiquity seemed to him to furnish models of political wisdom; and the lives of illustrious citizens of Greece and Rome suggested to him ideals

[1] F. Villegardelle, 'Code de la nature, augmenté de fragments importants de la Basiliade, avec l'analyse raisonné du système sociale de Morelly.' 1847.

of political virtue. Sparta was the special object of his idolatrous veneration. Of course, the theatrical antiquity of which he was the panegyrist never existed elsewhere than in excited and romantic imaginations.

He has expounded his political and juristic creed in two treatises of considerable interest, the 'Entretiens de Phocion' (1763) and 'De la Legislation' (1776). For our purpose it is sufficient simply to note the following points. Mably has enlarged on the dependence of politics and legislation on morality, and has strongly insisted that morality cannot maintain itself in a society devoid of religious faith, expressly condemning the opinions of Machiavelli and Bayle to the contrary. He recommends a community of goods and the banishment of commerce and the fine arts from a republic. He represents social inequalities as unjust and pernicious, and private property as their primary cause. He holds that equality was the first stage of society, and that it will be also its final form. He admits, however, that it cannot be easily or immediately attained, and therefore merely advises that properties be kept small, luxury in its various forms repressed, and all due care taken to prevent both the growth of pauperism and the individual accumulation of wealth. It shows the extent to which he was misled by his admiration of the Greek republics, that, in despite of his socialism and equalitarianism, he would exclude artisans from participation in public affairs.

Two of Mably's smaller treatises belong to the department of Historic—the 'De l'Étude de l'Histoire' (1778), and 'De la manière d'écrire Histoire' (1782). Both are contained in the twelfth volume of the collected edition of his works. They are rather commonplace and disappointing productions. The first mentioned, written for the use of the young Prince of Parma, dwells on the benefits which a ruler may derive from the study of history, and especially from the historical study of law and government. The other, which is the better of the two, especially insists on the importance to an historian of the study of the principles of morality and politics. This latter treatise has a certain measure of interest from the way in which the classical historians, Thucydides, Sallust, Tacitus, and Plutarch, are upheld as models, while De Thou, Voltaire, Hume, and Robert-

son are subjected to sharp censures. Voltaire's 'Essai sur les Mœurs,' for example, is pronounced to be only "une pasquinade digne des lecteurs qui l'admirent sur la foi de nos philosophes" (p. 445). Of modern historians Vertot alone is praised by Mably with warmth. What one misses above all in the treatises to which I refer, is any trace of reflection on the conditions and methods of historical research. No attempt is made in them to analyse the processes of historical investigation, and to determine what requirements ought to be fulfilled in sifting and appreciating historical evidence. While they belong, therefore, to the province of Historic, they cannot be said to have been of any special, and certainly not of any scientific, importance therein.

Neither Rousseau nor Morelly gave much attention to the study of history. Mably did, and he wrote at least one historical work of very considerable merit—'Observations sur l'Histoire de la France' (2 vols. 1765, with posthumous continuation, 2 vols. 1790). It was re-edited by M. Guizot, and well deserved the honour, owing to the light which it casts on the constitutional history of France. It was not only actually drawn from the primary documents, but quoted them throughout, so far as they were founded on, and thus the reader can judge for himself whether or not Mably correctly interpreted the authorities on which he relied. It will be found that he frequently did not; that he was in many instances an unsatisfactory exegete; but this does not deprive him of the merit, the rare and immense merit, of always adducing for his statements as to historical fact what he believed to be the original and proper evidence for them. He was among the first of historians fully and practically to recognise that what is of prime importance to a student of history is to obtain a clear view of the evidence, and that where this is not given, historical narrative, although it may please the imagination or exercise faith, cannot train the judgment or satisfy the appetite for truth. The defects to be found in Mably's treatment of French history arose mainly from the rigidity of his historical ideal and the narrowness of his historical sympathy. He so overestimated the pagan type of virtue, that he could not fairly appreciate the manifestations of Christian life. His taste was so exclusively classical

that medieval manners and institutions unduly offended him. His admiration of the Lacedæmonian republic was of a kind which rendered it impossible for him to be just to the French monarchy. All modern history was thus in his eyes a decadence.

By the way in which Rousseau, Morelly, and Mably inculcated and diffused the idea of equality, they laid the foundation of the socialist theory of history. They ignored, or implicitly denied, progress in history; and although they may have here and there verbally affirmed the perfectibility of man, the general tenor of their teaching as regards the course of human affairs in the past is inconsistent therewith. In words, they glorified liberty, as all their contemporaries did; but they showed by the proposals which they put forth that they were ready to sacrifice it in any sphere of life and to an almost unlimited extent if the realisation of equality could thereby be promoted. The equality, however, which involves the sacrifice of liberty must be also destructive both of social order and of social progress; and consequently its advocacy must be inconsistent with the admission of true conceptions of historical development, a process which can only be natural and normal where there is a due combination and correlation of factors and an appropriate interdependence and co-operation of functions. Hence the reason why socialist theories of history are so generally unsatisfactory; their authors have not sufficiently reflected on a preliminary question of decisive importance,—the question which Shakespeare puts into the mouth of Ulysses:—

> "How could communities,
> Degrees in schools, and brotherhoods in cities,
> Peaceful commerce, and dividable shores,
> The primogenitive and due of birth,
> Prerogative of age, crowns, sceptres, laurels,
> But by degree, stand in authentic place?"

The brother of the Abbé de Mably, the Abbé de Condillac (1715-80), who was, in the opinion of his contemporaries, *the philosopher* of their age, and the truest teacher of philosophy of all ages, published a 'Universal History' (1775) in thirteen volumes, yet a few lines are, perhaps, all to which he is here entitled. His 'Universal History' aimed at tracing the history

of philosophical opinions, of the sciences, and of civilisation. Its author's desire to select and present what was likely to be instructive and improving is throughout conspicuous; and his constant preoccupation to discover and indicate the causes and effects of events is not less manifest. But the work has the fatal defect of being altogether wanting in research and criticism. The facts in it are in grains and the reflections in bushels. The course of historical causation is not shown to have been in the historical development by exhibition of the facts, but is only diffusely declared to have been so in the opinion of the author. Besides, the statements of fact are not only intolerably few in comparison with those of reflection, but they are obviously drawn from such works as were most accessible, not from such as had most claim to be consulted. The account given of Greek philosophy, for example, is not only derived from Brücker, but so derived from him as to leave the impression that Condillac had probably never taken the trouble to read either the fragments of a pre-Socratic Greek philosopher or a treatise of a post-Socratic one. If he had at any time thus occupied himself, he certainly did not employ the knowledge so acquired to control or supplement Brücker. He had the keenest interest in psychological analysis, but he had no taste for historical criticism. He adhered to historical tradition with a closeness very uncommon among the philosophers of the eighteenth century; almost alone among them, for instance, he accepted the Biblical accounts of antediluvian times and miraculous occurrences.

Condillac has treated of historical progress on various occasions with characteristic judiciousness; but in one respect only, perhaps, can his teaching on the subject claim to have been original or distinctive—namely, in that it represented intellectual progress as entirely dependent on the use made of language. This he believed was what no one before him had done. Notwithstanding his acquiescence in the Biblical account of the primitive condition of man, he assumed that condition to have been one merely animal. The cardinal doctrine of his whole philosophy was that the sole root of mind is sense, and that all the contents and even all the faculties of mind are merely transformed sensations; and hence he naturally

believed that all the mental acquisitions of the race had been attained in the course of a process of development which originated when human beings were more ignorant than the most ignorant savages are at present. He accordingly supposed that at first, and for long, men had no other means of making their impressions or desires known to one another than cries and gestures; that, like the beasts, like children, and, according to reports of travellers, like certain still existing savage peoples, they had no language in the strict sense of the term; and hence, that language does not constitute an absolute distinction between men and beasts, being merely a human invention, although the greatest of human inventions. Language, properly so called, he viewed as the result of a slow development from the instinctive and natural modes of communication; but it is scarcely necessary to say that he ignored the very serious difficulties which must be disposed of before the development of real words out of inarticulate cries can be reasonably regarded as proved, or even as intelligible. He represented the discovery of language as a decisive epoch in history, and argued that in its first stage it had been a *chanted speech*, composed of sounds variously and strongly inflected. From this stage of it sprang music and poetry, while gesticulation gave rise to dancing; whence the Greek term *μουσική* was inclusive of all the arts. To poetry succeeded prose and eloquence, which are indispensable to, and characteristic of, a still more advanced stage of culture. When a man of genius arises and so manipulates and moulds a language as to reveal its merits and capabilities, men of talent hasten to use it as their instrument; artistic taste and ambition of all kinds are evoked; and an age of rich and refined civilisation appears. The development of a people's language and that of its intellect are inseparable and always accordant.[1]

As in England, Italy, and Germany, so in France, many attempts were made in the eighteenth century to explain history, or at least large classes of historical phenomena, by means of hypotheses suggested by science. Nicholas Boulanger (1722-59),

[1] Perhaps almost everything of value written by Condillac regarding history is contained in the 'Logique de Condillac, à l'usage des élèves des prytanées et lycées de la république française,' par Noel. 2 tom.: 1802.

when pursuing his avocations as an engineer, was greatly impressed by certain geological evidences of the action of water, which he felt constrained to refer to a tremendous flood; and, being a man of lively imagination and of confused erudition, he came to regard this flood as a key to the understanding of all ancient history. It was its terrors, he supposed, which had originated religion and despotism, and so caused ancient history to be what it was. The history, he represented, as having passed through four stages,—theocracy, aristocracy, democracy, and monarchy. He was probably the first Frenchman influenced to any considerable extent by Vico.[1] Charles Dupuis (1742-1809), author of the once famous book 'L'Origine de tous les Cultes,' made an elaborate endeavour to give an astronomical solution of the mythologies and superstitions of the human race, and even went so far as to deny the historical existence of Christ, explaining the events of his life as corresponding to the course of the sun, and identifying the twelve apostles with the twelve signs of the zodiac. Court de Gebelin (1727-84), relied on linguistic hypotheses in his efforts to throw light on "the primitive world," and to resolve mythologies into their original elements. The attempts to combine science and history just referred to were far from successful, yet are worthy of being mentioned, as they were attempts in a right direction. More successful, because easier of accomplishment, were the endeavours made to combine the sciences and history in histories of the sciences. Among those who performed work of this kind Goguet and Bailly especially distinguished themselves.

Without irrelevance I might proceed to show how, in the latter part of the eighteenth century, the conception of historical progress was supplemented by that of a universal development of nature, and to describe the forms in which this latter hypothesis displayed itself. Its origination was due to a variety of causes, and especially to the advances of physical science, the spread of theoretical materialism, and the increased freedom and boldness of speculation. To trace its history,

[1] A collected edition of Boulanger's works (in 8 vols.) was published in 1792. 'L'Antiquité dévoilée' and 'Le Despotisme oriental' are the most important. Several of the irreligious writings ascribed to him are spurious. 'Le Christianisme dévoilé' was fabricated by a person called Damilaville.

however, even as it appears in the writings of Maillet, Diderot, Buffon, Robinet, Dom Deschamps, Lamarck, &c., would require much more space than is at my disposal.

The Abbé Raynal's 'Philosophical and Political History of the Settlements and Trade of Europeans in the East and West Indies' was the most popular of all the historical writings which appeared in France during the reign of Louis XVI., and also one of the most representative of the taste and spirit of the period. Published in 1771, it rapidly passed through twenty editions, and was translated into the languages of almost all civilised peoples. It largely owed the extraordinary favour with which the contemporaries of Raynal received it to those declamations about liberty and justice, tyrants and priests, and those effusions of sentimentalism, which now only give offence. These *purpurei panni* interwoven into it, and composed, it would appear, for the most part by Diderot, although they greatly contributed to its immediate success, have led to its undue depreciation by posterity. It was the fruit of twenty years' diligent labour, and, intrinsically, a highly deserving work, containing a vast amount of new and valuable information, well arranged, and vividly, although too rhetorically, presented. It was the first book which effectively showed how important a factor commerce had been in modern history. The way in which this was done was what was truly philosophical in it, not the general and professedly philosophical reflections which it contains, and which are mostly superficial and pretentious.

During the progress of the Revolution two works were published which professed to delineate philosophically the course of history. Both were written by enthusiastic advocates of the principles of eighteenth-century "enlightenment," and ardent admirers of the Revolution as a grand effort to realise the true ideal of social life; by men closely akin in convictions, spirit, and aim. Yet they are of very unequal merit; and while the one may be very briefly dealt with, the other will require a comparatively lengthened treatment. The two works referred to are Volney's 'Ruins' and Condorcet's 'Sketch.'

Constantine Francis Chasseboeuf, Count Volney, acquired fame as a traveller, an orientalist, and an historian. Although

very hostile to religion, he was a sincere, magnanimous, virtuous man. His 'Ruins; or, A Survey of the Revolutions of Empires' (1791), is the work by which he is best known, although it is much inferior in real value to his 'Travels in Syria and Egypt,' his 'Description of the Character and Soil of the United States,' or even his 'Researches on Ancient History.' It is a sort of philosophy of history and of religion based on tenets of Locke, Condillac, Rousseau, and Dupuis. A general summary of its character and contents may be given as follows:—

Contemplating the ruins of Palmyra, the author meditates on the disappearance of extinct empires, and foresees a similar fate for those which are now most flourishing and powerful. The genius of history appears to him, and explains that fatality is a meaningless word, and that the source of human calamities is in man himself, his passions and faults. Appearing on earth as an ignorant savage, man gradually emerges from this state under the attraction of pleasure and the repulsion of pain. His only motive of action, self-love, renders him at once social and industrious, but also, growing as it does with the growth of the arts and of civilisation, leads him to confound happiness with unregulated enjoyment, makes him avaricious and violent, and causes the strong to oppress the weak and the weak to conspire against the strong. Slavery and inequality, war and corruption, have consequently followed on the liberty and equality, peace and innocence, of primitive times. But as man is perfectible this condition of things cannot be permanent, and during the last three centuries there has been great progress: intellects have been brought into communication as never before; knowledge has, thanks especially to printing, been marvellously diffused; discoveries and inventions of all kinds multiplied and utilised. Humanity is now fairly started on a career of conquest; the emancipation of the mind is rapidly advancing. Soon morality itself will come to be rationally viewed; individuals and nations will recognise it to be the object of *a physical science;* it will be universally acknowledged that there is only one law, that of nature; only one code, that of reason; only one throne, that of justice; only one altar, that of concord. When men clearly see

what morality is, and consequently clearly see that it is their own security and advantage, they will not fail to practise it.

Next, the ministers and interpreters of all worships are represented as convoked, as compelled to speak on behalf of their various creeds, and in doing so, as contradicting and refuting one onother, opposing revelations to revelations, miracles to miracles, authorities to authorities, until they render it evident that they are all deceived or deceivers. A naturalistic explanation is given of the way in which nations rise and fall, and of the order in which they appear. Religious ideas are maintained to spring from the impressions of sense, and to assume in their course a necessary succession of forms. The stages through which religion is described as passing are these: (1) worship of the elements and physical powers of nature; (2) worship of the stars, or Sabeism; (3) worship of symbols, or idolatry; (4) worship of two principles, or dualism; (5) mythical or moral worship, or the system of a future state; (6) worship of the world as animated, or of the universe under different emblems; (7) worship of the soul of the world, the vital principle of the universe; and (8) worship of the demiurgus, or supreme artificer. Christianity is represented as the allegorical worship of the sun. The entire development of religion is exhibited as a vain and illusory process; all the ideas and beliefs which it implies as uncertain and unverifiable. Men are, consequently, exhorted to renounce all opinions regarding a spiritual world, and to concern themselves only with that perceptible world of which alone they can know anything.

Among the last words of the work are these, and they express well its chief conclusion: " If we would reach uniformity of opinion, we must previously attain certainty, and verify the resemblance of our ideas to their models. Now this cannot be done except in so far as the objects of our inquiry can be referred to the testimony, and subjected to the examination, of our senses. Whatever cannot be brought to this trial is beyond the limits of our understanding; we have neither rule to try it by, nor measure by which to institute a comparison, nor source of demonstration and knowledge regarding it. Whence it is obvious that, in order to live in peace and harmony, we must

consent not to pronounce upon such objects, nor assign to them importance. We must draw a line of demarcation between such as can be verified and such as cannot, and separate by an inviolable barrier the world of fantastic beings from the world of realities; that is to say, all civil effect must be taken away from theological and religious opinions."

Volney was one of the many precursors of Comte; and, indeed, as decided a positivist as Comte himself, in all respects except in name.[1]

II.

Amidst all the crimes and sufferings of the Revolution many of the sincerest and worthiest of its partisans, among whom Condorcet must undoubtedly be numbered, remained full of confidence and hope. The splendours of a mirage gave a deceptive beauty to the waste howling wilderness before them. Faith in the future of the human race strengthened them to bear even the horrors of the Reign of Terror; faith in a thorough regeneration of the world and a blessed millennium. It was "a time," says Hegel, "in which a spiritual enthusiasm thrilled through the world, as if the reconciliation between the divine and secular was now first accomplished"; "a time," says Wordsworth,—

> "In which the meagre, stale, forbidding ways
> Of custom, law, and statute, took at once
> The attraction of a country in romance!
> When Reason seemed the most to assert her rights,
> When most intent on making of herself
> A prime enchantress—to assist the work
> Which then was going forward in her name."

The 'Esquisse d'un Tableau Historique des Progres de l'Esprit Humain,' written by Marie-Jean-Antoine-Nicolas Caritat, Marquis de Condorcet, in 1793, is thoroughly characteristic of the time.[2] Although composed when its author lay concealed

[1] Fr. Picavet, in his valuable work 'Les Idéologues, Essai sur l'histoire des idées et des théories scientifiques, philosophiques, religieuses, etc., en France depuis 1789' (1891), treats of Volney, pp. 128-140; of Dupuis, pp. 140-143; and of Condorcet, pp. 101-116.

[2] On Condorcet as an historical philosopher, see Auguste Comte, 'Cours de Philosophie Positive,' iv. 252-262, and 'Système de Politique Positive,' iv., appendice general, 109-111; Laurent, 'Études,' xii. 121-126; Morley's "Condorcet"

from the emissaries of Robespierre in the garret of a friend, it is pervaded by a spirit of excessive hopefulness, and pictures a glorious future as at hand. It was with the vision of the guillotine before him, and in constant dread of a violent death, that this brilliant and generous, if somewhat fanciful and vacillating man, sincere in his love and strong in his faith towards humanity, comforted himself after all other religion had died out of his soul, by trying to demonstrate that the evils of life had arisen from a conspiracy of priests and rulers against their fellows, and from the bad laws and bad institutions which they had succeeded in creating; but that the human race would finally conquer its enemies, and so completely free itself of its evils that even disease and suffering should almost cease, and truth, liberty, equality, justice, and love should universally abound. His work is thus a sort of hymn in celebration of the dignity of man, and in salutation of the advent of a reign of righteousness and peace, which cannot fail to interest and move, were it only from the fact that it was composed almost under the axe of the executioner.

The circumstances in which it was written were thus the most unfavourable that can well be imagined for minute accuracy of execution, and must, in the eyes of a candid critic, go far to excuse its numerous errors of detail. It would be ungenerous to insist on these, and it would be for our purpose, or any good purpose, useless, as the only value which can reasonably be attributed to the book lies in its general ideas. It must be considered, as its author wished it to be considered, as a mere programme of principles—a sketch to be filled up in a subsequent and elaborate work could the guillotine be escaped, which, alas! was not possible, except by suicide in prison.

The fundamental idea of Condorcet is that of a human per-

in 'Critical Miscellanies'; Mathurin Gillet, 'L'Utopie de Condorcet,' 1884; Janet, ii. 682-692; and two articles of Renouvier, 'Crit. Phil,' année x., pp. 117-128, 145-160. I have restated the most fundamental of Comte's criticisms on pp. 328, 329. I may also refer to my article on Condorcet in 'Encycl. Brit.' In the interval between the publication of Turgot's 'Discourses' and Condorcet's 'Sketch,' there appeared writings of a somewhat kindred nature by Iselin, Wegelin, Kant, and Herder, and by Ferguson, Lord Kames, and Priestley, but Condorcet's work bears no traces of their influence. In historical philosophy Turgot was his immediate, and almost sole teacher.

fectibility which has manifested itself in continuous progress in the past, and must lead to indefinite progress in the future. Man, he endeavours to show, has advanced uninterruptedly at a more or less rapid rate, from the moment of his appearance on earth to the present time, in the path of enlightenment, virtue, and happiness, and will continue to advance so long as the world lasts. As the whole intellectual and moral life of the individual is developed out of a susceptibility to sensations, and the power of retaining, discriminating, and combining them, so all the varieties of civilisation, all the phases of history, are but the collective work of the individuals thus humbly endowed. Their starting-point is the lowest stage of barbarism: the first men possessing no superiority over the other animals which did not result directly from superiority of bodily organisation.

The stages which the human race has already gone through, or, in other words, the great epochs of history, are regarded as nine in number. Of these the first three can confessedly be described only conjecturally from general observations as to the development of the human faculties and the analogies of savage life. In the first epoch, men are united into hordes of hunters and fishers, who acknowledge in some degree public authority and the claims of family relationship, and who make use of an articulate language, "invented by some men of genius, the eternal benefactors of the human race, but whose names and countries are for ever buried in oblivion." In the second epoch, the pastoral state, property is introduced, and along with it inequality of conditions, and even slavery, but also leisure to cultivate intelligence, to invent some of the simpler arts, and to acquire some of the more elementary truths of science. In the third epoch, the agricultural state, as leisure and wealth are greater, labour better distributed and applied, and the means of communication increased and extended, progress is still more rapid. With the invention of alphabetic writing the conjectural part of history closes, and the more or less authenticated part commences. By an omission still greater than Bossuet's, China, India, "the five great monarchies," Judea, and, in fact, all nations comprehended in the oriental world, are passed unappreciated and even unnoticed; and the fourth and fifth epochs are represented as corresponding to Greece and Rome. The

middle ages are divided into two epochs, the former of which terminates with the Crusades, and the latter with the invention of printing. The eighth epoch extends from the invention of printing to the revolution in the method of philosophic thinking accomplished by Descartes. And the ninth epoch begins with that great intellectual revolution and ends with the great political and moral revolution of 1789, and is illustrious through the discovery of the true system of the physical universe by Newton, of human nature by Locke and Condillac, and of society by Turgot, Price, and Rousseau.

Now nothing can be more important in any attempt at a philosophical delineation of the course of history than the division into periods. That ought of itself to exhibit the plan of the development, the line and distance already traversed, and the direction of future movement. It should be made on a single principle, so that the series of periods may be homogeneous, but on a principle so fundamental and comprehensive as to pervade the history not only as a whole but in each of its elements, and to be able to furnish guidance to the historian of any special development of human knowledge and life. The discovery and proof of such a principle is one of the chief services which the philosophy of history may be legitimately expected to render to the historians of science, of religion, of morality, and of art. And if it fail to render this service, this can only be because it has failed to accomplish its own distinctive and proper work—failed to grasp and follow the thread that guides through the labyrinth of history, and allows the mind to trace in some measure its plan, and to conjecture with some degree of probability its purpose. But failure is very possible, success very difficult. No superficial glance can possibly detect, nor happy accident disclose, the true principle of historical division, any more than of botanical or zoological classification. It does not lie on the surface, but in the essential nature of the thing, and implies a thorough acquaintance therewith, a profound insight into the course and tendencies of history, attainable only through prolonged and patient study, and after repeated failures. Condorcet had not the requisite knowledge of the subject; had not gone deep enough in his investigations into historical development, to

apprehend the principle by which its stages or periods should be determined; and could only *seem* to determine them by fixing, and even that on inadequate grounds, on certain conspicuous events sufficiently distant from each other to divide the whole of European history into a few ages, and yet not so unequally distant that the inequality should of itself show the non-co-ordinacy of these ages. And not only is there no proof given that the events which are thus selected as the origins of periods, the turning-points of history, are all of the same rank—that is, on a level as to importance or influence; but, as Comte has well remarked, they are not even of the same order, one being industrial, another political, another scientific, another religious.

Another defect must be indicated. Condorcet belonged to a generation which was narrow and unjust in its judgment of many great causes, and he did not in that respect rise above the general spirit of his time. He carries into his estimate of the past not the calm catholic spirit of the philosopher, but the passionate and prejudiced spirit of sectarian fanaticism. He sees no beauty or worth in philosophy except when it attempts to explain the world on mechanical and sensational principles, and in religion none at all. Idealism and Christianity appear to him as simply delusions; Monarchy and the Church as two essentially pernicious institutions, the one of which has persistently tyrannised over men by brute force, and the other constantly betrayed them with lies. These views are of course both uncharitable and inconsistent with the testimony of history. They are inconsistent even with Condorcet's own fundamental notions of progress and perfectibility. Progress, continuous and indefinite improvement, should have reasons. But what reasons for them can there be, if all the most powerful and durable agencies and institutions in history have been essentially obstructive and hurtful? How comes it, if such be the case, that retrogression is not the characteristic of history instead of progress? It might have been possible for Condorcet, had his philosophy been other than it was, to have evaded if not avoided this difficulty by ascribing progress to a power inherent in human nature, and capable of not only dispensing with any external aid, but of triumphing over every external opposition—to an innate spontaneous and irresistible faculty; but his sensationalism and

denial of *a priori* principles and original tendencies precluded his having recourse to this explanation, and left him no escape from self-contradiction. History itself is less illogical; never contradicts itself; never presents anything good or bad for which there is not a sufficient cause. If there has been anywhere improvement in the world, it has been because there the forces of good have been on the whole mightier than those of evil; and if anywhere deterioration, it has been because there the superior strength has been on the side of evil.

The most original, and, notwithstanding its errors, the most important part of Condorcet's treatise, is that which has been most censured and ridiculed, the last chapter, which has for subject the future of the human race. There the idea that generalisations from the past must supply data for prevision of the future in historical as well as in physical science, is for the first time perhaps adequately insisted on.

> "If man," it is said, "can predict with almost entire confidence phenomena when he knows their laws, if even when these laws are unknown he can from experience of the past foresee with great probability the events of the future, why should it be deemed chimerical to attempt to picture the probable destiny of the human race in accordance with the results of its history? The sole foundation of belief in the natural sciences is the idea that the general laws, known or ignored, which regulate the phenomena of the universe, are necessary and constant; and for what reason should this hold less true of the intellectual and moral faculties of man than of the other operations of nature?" Since opinions formed on the experience of the past are the rules of conduct adopted by the wiser portion of mankind, why should the philosopher be forbidden to rest his conjectures on the same basis, provided he attribute to them no greater certainty than the number, the consistency, and the accuracy of his observations warrant?[1]

It is owing to his having at once distinctly enunciated this idea and sought to realise it that both Saint-Simon and Comte have assigned to his work a place among the most important productions of the scientific mind, although thoroughly aware of its defects. The truth of the idea is not dependent on any exaggerated view of progress as the continuous, ubiquitous, inevitable manifestation of an inherent faculty or force, but on

[1] Esquisse, pp. 327, 328 (2d ed.).

the simple fact of progress in directions which can be traced; nor is it affected by mistakes which Condorcet may have made in his delineation of the future. And without any wish to excuse or explain away his mistakes of the latter kind, I believe they have not only been more than sufficiently dwelt on, but greatly exaggerated. It is erroneous to represent him as assuming the *rôle* of prophet farther than that a certain sort of prevision seemed to him essentially involved in historical science,—farther than that general laws regulative of the past seemed to him to warrant general inferences respecting the future. He confined himself, however, entirely to general inferences, and never pretended to predict particular events. He confined himself, indeed, to infer from the entire history of the past three tendencies as likely to be characteristic features of the future; and to believe with measure in any of them appears to involve nothing obviously absurd and utopian.

These three features of the future, or tendencies of the present, or directions of progress, are: 1, The destruction of inequality between nations; 2, the destruction of inequality between classes; and 3, the improvement of individuals. Now, as to the first, the destruction of inequality between nations, Condorcet does not thereby mean that nations tend to become, or ever will become, in all respects alike, which would really amount to holding that nations, as nations, must cease to exist. Nationality is inconsistent with absolute equality. But only inexcusable carelessness can explain any one's supposing him to believe in such equality. That which he speaks of is equality of liberty or right, the ordinary signification of the term among his contemporaries, and that which is found in the legislation of the period—*e.g.*, in the Codes of 1791 and 1793. Hence when he says nations tend to equality he means simply, as he himself tells us, that they all tend to freedom; that liberty is what they are alike entitled to, and will alike enjoy; that nature has not doomed the inhabitants of any country to slavery either of body or mind, but made them for independence and the exercise of reason. The differences or distinctions which flow from the very use of reason and freedom do not seem to him incompatible with equality, but only those which cannot be traced to the true, *i.e.*, free moral personality as their

ground; only those which, on the contrary, attack and seek to subvert it, by denial of the right of all nations without distinction to rational freedom. Nations, he thinks, are equal if equally free, and are all tending to equality because all tending to freedom.

Thus understood, the disappearance of inequality between nations implies the disappearance of inequality between the different classes of citizens in a nation. It presupposes that the right to freedom does not divide but unite men, belonging of its very nature to all; that

> "Our life is turned
> Out of her course, wherever man is made
> An offering or a sacrifice, a tool
> Or implement, a passive thing employed
> As a brute mean, without acknowledgment
> Of common right or interest in the end;
> Used or abused, as selfishness may prompt."

The inequality between the different classes in a nation comprises inequality of wealth and instruction; and, according to Condorcet, the tendency of historical progress is towards equality as regards both. In saying this of wealth, he does not mean that the time is coming when no man will be richer than another, but simply that the numerous distinctions between men according to their wealth which have been originated by the civil laws, and perpetuated by factitious means, are destined to be swept away; and that their abolition, leaving property, trade, and industry entirely free, must help to destroy all fixed class distinctions—moneyed inclusive—all casteship, in society. He may have been mistaken. Many think that the experience of our own country since it entered on the path which Condorcet recommended to the world, goes to show that wealth left to itself tends not to equality but to inequality; and the most democratic of nations, the United States, far from manifesting, as might have been looked for, an equal or higher faith in freedom of trade, shows a singular aversion to it. Under the English *régime* of liberty, the rich are always, it is said, growing richer, and the poor poorer, and so the distance between rich and poor is continually widening instead of lessening. But does the little wealth of the poor tend when free to decrease in the same mode and sense that the much wealth of the rich tends

to increase? Or must not, on the contrary, when free, the tendency alike of small and of large sums be to increase; and if the little of the poor be actually seen to become less, must it not be owing to some disturbing cause, such as population outgrowing capital, and neither to freedom nor the increase of the riches of the rich in a state of freedom, both of which of themselves only tend to diminish the poverty of the poor? And granting that the difference of fortune between the wealthiest and the poorest member of the community is greater at present than ever it was, are not the number of intermediate fortunes, their gradation, and the way in which they pass from one person to another, sufficient notwithstanding to establish the existence of that tendency to equality, even as regards wealth, for which Condorcet contended? Further, have we not simply to look around us and mark how rapidly landed property is passing out of noble into trading and mercantile hands, and how vainly the new proprietors must strive to gain the social position of their predecessors, in order to convince ourselves that free trade is a most democratic thing, surely and steadily pulling the higher classes of society down to a lower level? It may very well be thought, then, that in this respect society is tending in the direction indicated by Condorcet; but even if not, his opinion is simply erroneous, and neither absurd nor utopian; a proposition for discussion, not for ridicule.

So when he speaks of a tendency in history to equality of instruction, equality must again be understood as an attribute of liberty, and as meaningless or mischievous when detached from it and regarded as a separate or co-ordinate principle. He in the plainest terms rejects the notion that no man is to receive more learning than another, but all are to be taught the same things and to the same extent. The equality of instruction for which he contends is certainly not that which would give all men the same amount of knowledge; it is only that which will suffice to destroy all slavish dependence. He holds that by a choice of the appropriate kinds of knowledge and of the means best adapted to communicate them, the entire mass of a people may be instructed in all that each individual needs to know in order to secure the free development of his industry and faculties; that equality carried thus

far, the inequality of the natural faculties of each would benefit all as regards both science and practice; and that all men ought to receive so much education, and that of such a character, as will enable them to live as men, as rational and free beings, and not as brute creatures which are driven and ruled from without for the pleasure and interest of a master. The pages in which he states what he means by "the equality of instruction which we can hope to attain, and with which we ought to be satisfied," and indicates his reasons for believing that it would be favourable to a real equality in every sphere of life, even where natural inequalities are allowed free development, are as admirable for their lucidity and reasonableness as for their eloquence; they are full of a noble enthusiasm, but contain not a sentence which warrants the accusation of utopianism.

The third and most famous inference of our author is the indefinite perfectibility of human nature itself, intellectually, morally, and physically. He uses even the term infinite, and Cousin and other critics have taken him rigidly at his word, but very unfairly, as he clearly shows his meaning merely to be that no fixed term or limit is assignable to progress. He has nowhere denied that progress is conditioned both by the constitution of humanity and the character of its surroundings, but he affirms that these conditions are compatible with endless progress; and, in fact, only a being not absolute and infinite, but conditioned and finite, is capable of progress of any kind. An absolutely infinite progress, implying the progress of an absolutely infinite being, is a contradiction in terms; but Condorcet was quite right in thinking that the human mind can assign no fixed limits to its own advancement in knowledge, and that science both as to wealth of results and improvement of methods may grow more and more for ever, constantly finding its horizon recede, constantly attaining a wider and clearer range of vision. The very attempt, indeed, of reason to assign limits to its own progress, is the same sort of absurdity as would be a man's attempting to leap out of or into his own body. It is not necessary, however, here to have recourse to the metaphysical reasoning which establishes this fundamental truth of metaphysical science; it is enough merely to ask those who deny it to state where they suppose knowledge is necessitated to stop. Thus

far, then, Condorcet was on firm ground. But he went farther; he supposed that intellectual acquisitions do not entirely pass away with the individuals or generations which have made them, but are to some extent transmitted or inherited; and that in consequence there is in the course of ages a gradual increase not only of the intellectual wealth, but of the intellectual ability of men. It may be so. The opinion is not absurd, not indefensible. It seems an almost necessary inference from the theory of development which was only struggling into existence when Condorcet wrote, but which is now the most prevalent and influential of scientific doctrines. It is to be regretted that Condorcet did not indicate the reasons for his opinion, or attempt to show that the facts which at least appear to contradict it in reality do not. Doubtless he would have done so had adverse fate not prevented him. The want, however, of any proof or investigation of the kind does not affect his main position. The doctrine of the indefinite perfectibility of knowledge is quite distinct from, and rests on quite other grounds than, the doctrine of the indefinite perfectibility of the intellectual constitution. Philosophy, science, poetry, and politics may have made constant progress from the origin of history to the present day; and yet the philosophic genius of Plato, the scientific genius of Aristotle, the poetical genius of Homer, and the political genius of Pericles, may never have been surpassed or even equalled.

Condorcet believed as firmly in the indefinite progress of morality as of knowledge. He thought the knowledge of moral truth could not retrograde or remain stationary if the knowledge of all other truth advanced, and that, as in other spheres so in ethics, action would correspond to knowledge. "Men could not," he says, "become enlightened upon the nature and development of their moral sentiments, upon the principles of morality, and upon the natural motives for conforming their conduct to their interests, either as individuals or as members of society, without making an advancement in moral practice not less real than in moral science itself." "Just as the mathematical and physical sciences contribute to improve the arts that are employed for our most simple wants, is it not equally," he asks, "in the necessary order of nature that the

progress of the moral and political sciences should exercise a similar influence upon the motives that direct our sentiments and our actions?" The problem with which he had to deal, however, was too complex and difficult to be solved in so simple and superficial a way. He was in all probability right in holding that there has been considerable moral progress in the past, and may be illimitable moral progress in the future; right in maintaining that the growth of knowledge is naturally favourable to the diffusion of virtue, and that the destruction of false and the establishment of true beliefs are indispensable to the improvement of laws, institutions, and manners; right, in short, as against all who have represented ignorance as the condition of innocence, intellectual progress as indifferent or prejudicial to moral advancement, or morality as having been wholly or nearly stationary. On the other hand, he was as probably wrong in supposing that the progress of knowledge, and even of knowledge of ethical subjects, necessarily or universally brings with it improvement of conduct, or that virtue must be in proportion to general enlightenment; wrong in believing, or at least virtually assuming, that moral progress is dependent on no other causes than intellectual progress and those influences to which such progress is itself due; and wrong, like so many of his contemporaries, in regarding man as good by nature, and only evil owing to ignorance, erroneous instruction, or bad institutions. He overlooked the greatest of all impediments to moral progress, those which are inherent in human nature itself, in the lusts of the flesh, in the passions of the soul. He asked: "What vicious habit can be mentioned, what practice contrary to good faith, what crime even, the origin and first cause of which may not be traced in the legislation, institutions, and prejudices of the country in which we observed such habit, such practice, or such crime to be committed?" But he did not ask: Whence have legislation, institutions, and prejudices derived the injustice and vice which are in them? He failed to perceive that legislation, institutions, and prejudices are effects, not "first causes."

Admission of the doctrine of indefinite moral progression does not necessitate admission of the doctrine that the men of later generations will be born with better moral dispositions than

those of earlier times. True or false, this latter doctrine of Condorcet has no essential connection with the former. It is proper to add that he himself has not presented it as more than "a conjecture which enlarges the boundary of our hopes," and which "analogy, an investigation of the human faculties, and even some facts, appear to authorise."

The extension of the doctrine of perfectibility to the physical constitution of man is its most doubtful application; and Condorcet at this point must, I think, be admitted to have fallen into extravagance. It is inexcusable, indeed, to represent him, as some careless or unscrupulous critics have done, as holding that our physical constitution may be so perfected that man will live for ever; he expressly says, "certainly man will not become immortal." He believes, however, that the improvements in medicine, sanitary science, political economy, and the art of government, may vastly, and even illimitably, prolong life; "that a period will arrive when death will be nothing more than the effect either of extraordinary accidents or of the increasingly slow destruction of the vital powers; and that the duration of the interval between the birth of man and this destruction, will itself have no assignable limit." The distance between the moment in which man begins to exist and the common term when, in the course of nature, without malady, and without accident, he finds it impossible any longer to exist, will, he affirms, for ever increase, unless its increase be prevented by physical revolutions, either in conformity to a law by which, though approaching continually an unlimited extent, it could never reach it, or a law by which, in the immensity of ages, it may acquire a greater extent than any determinate quantity which may be assigned as its limit.[1]

Now there is much in this theory which is true and reasonable. We certainly do not exactly know the normal limits of human existence, and cannot precisely tell when death must necessarily occur even in the undisturbed course of nature. That the rate of mortality diminishes with the advance of medical science and the progress of civilisation is a proposition which had probability in its favour when Condorcet wrote, and which has been amply established since. However difficult it

[1] Esquisse, pp. 379-383.

may be to prove, it is easy to conceive, and in no way inherently absurd to suppose, that a time will come when death will result only from accidents which cannot be foreseen or from slow decay. Reason may not be able positively to authorise, but neither is it entitled positively to forbid, the hope that the actual average duration of human life will approximate indefinitely to its average normal or natural duration. If, when Condorcet speaks of the infinite prolongation of human life, he speaks merely of its mean duration approaching indefinitely its natural limits, then there is hardly anything unreasonable in what he teaches as to the physical perfectibility of man. And even according to so careful an expositor as M. Janet this is really all that he teaches on the subject.[1] I cannot, however, so interpret our author's language. He appears to me plainly to mean that "la durée moyenne de la vie," "la durée de l'intervalle moyen," is not the average of actual but of normal life—not the distance between birth and death as it is, but "la distance entre la moment où l'homme commence à vivre et l'époque commune ou naturellement sans maladie, sans accident, il éprouve la difficulté d'être;" an average and distance, therefore, which can only be indefinitely prolonged by the indefinite recession or retreat of such death as is the natural limit of life. That death will indefinitely recede, and the distance between the natural limits of life illimitably increase, is, I think, his doctrine; and it is one for which I cannot perceive that we have any evidence. The decrease of the death-rate of a country is no indication that the bodies of its inhabitants are becoming endowed with more enduring powers of life. Not a step has yet been made towards proving that there is an organic evolution towards longevity at work either among human beings or mere animals.

Condorcet was aware that his hopes as to human progress were dependent on its not being arrested by physical revolutions, on the earth retaining its situation in the system of the universe, and on no change occurring which would prevent the human race from exercising the faculties or finding the resources which it at present possesses. A more thorough and searching investigation would have shown him that society

[1] II. p. 689.

carries within itself greater dangers to its progress than any which it is likely to encounter from without, and that these are of such a kind that we cannot foresee to any great distance the future of humanity. His optimism as to that future was as uncritical as is our later pessimism regarding it. It was not a legitimate inference from his science; it was his religion,—the faith which yielded him strength and consolation after other faith had been lost.

The erroneousness of Condorcet's opinion as to the indefinite prolongation of human life is clearly pointed out in the 'Essai sur l'Histoire de l'Espèce Humaine,' par C. A. Walckenaer, published in 1798. It is shown that bodily growth is otherwise limited than social progress, and that although individuals must die in a short term of years, it may be possible for nations to live for an indefinite time. The work is characterised by good sense; gives evidence of a large amount of reading; and touches instructively on a great number of points. It is not so important, however, as to call for an extended notice. It distinguishes and distributes the stages of social development according to the modes in which men obtain their subsistence. Hence the first period of history is represented by peoples who nourish themselves chiefly with the spontaneous productions of the ground; the second by peoples that live chiefly by fishing and hunting; the third by pastoral peoples; the fourth by agricultural peoples unaided by commerce and manufactures; the fifth by peoples at once agricultural, commercial, and industrial; and the sixth by peoples in the decadence of the arts, manufactures, and trade.

CHAPTER V.

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY: GENERAL REMARKS—HISTORIOGRAPHY.

I.

The Revolution, after passing through various stages during which the minds of men were too engrossed with the events of the day to be able to study those of bygone ages, issued in the military despotism of Napoleon, which proved as unfavourable to historical science as democratic disorder and violence had been. Napoleon was the persistent oppressor of free thought. He feared and hated speculation; cherished a mean jealousy of every kind of intellectual superiority which he could not enslave; and exerted the immense force which his genius and fortune gave him to turn reason from every path of inquiry which might lead to conclusions unfavourable to his own schemes and interests. He made France, as has been said, one soldier, and himself the god of that soldier; and to confirm and perpetuate the idolatry, he strove to extinguish light and to crush liberty. He failed as he deserved to do; and was signally punished for his selfish abuse of vast powers, and for preferring a baneful glory to loyal service in the cause of France and of humanity. When he fell, the profusion with which ideas burst forth showed how ineffective all his efforts at the repression of thought had been. By partially and temporarily checking its utterance he had probably rather favoured than hindered its formation. During the period of comparative silence which he enforced, men did not cease to investigate and reflect, although they had to keep their conclusions to themselves. Consequently

when freedom returned with the Restoration, it soon appeared that there had been growing up diverse systems of opinion, all resting on, or at least involving, general theories of history.

Before reviewing these theories, however, I must indicate some of the conditions which favoured their rise and affected their development.

A change which took place in philosophical belief was one condition of the kind. What little philosophy was taught in France during the Empire was that which had prevailed in the latter half of the eighteenth century, the Condillacian ideology which derived all knowledge from impressions of sense. But this doctrine was already in decay at the commencement of the nineteenth century, and imperial toleration did not tend to reinvigorate it or to increase its influence. Some of the latest representatives of ideology were accomplished and able men, but they required to discuss only safe themes and to speak as under authority; they could not apply their principles with independence to the solution of religious, political, or social questions, or to the elucidation of the course or significance of history, or, indeed, to the discussion of any subject of great and general interest. Besides, their doctrine itself was increasingly felt to be barren and unprofitable. Imagination and feeling, the heart and spirit, metaphysics and religion, made more and more emphatic claims to a satisfaction which a doctrine reducing everything to sensation and using only analysis could not give. Ideology scarcely survived the Empire. The modifications made on it by Laromiguière and Maine de Biran rendered only more apparent its radical insufficiency. Royer-Collard, in opposing to it the philosophy of Reid, showed the necessity of getting rid of it, and suggested the possibility of finding a better system. Cousin enthroned in its stead an eclectic philosophy which professed to be the outcome of all the philosophies of the past; to reject what was false and to combine what was true in sensualism, idealism, scepticism, and mysticism; to employ as its method close internal observation, strict analysis, and careful induction, yet to rise thereby from psychology to ontology, and not to neglect dealing with any of the great problems of metaphysics or to refuse satisfaction to any of the real interests of religion; to welcome light from all quarters,

and to stimulate research in every direction; and to unite philosophy and history in the most intimate and fruitful co-operation. A spiritualist philosophy derived from or akin to the eclecticism of Cousin was the predominant philosophy in France for about forty years, and is still not without vigour. What the philosophical situation in France has been during the last thirty years need not be at present described.[1]

A change occurred in regard to religion analogous to that as to philosophy. Before and during the Revolution a fanatically anti-religious spirit prevailed. But this spirit was discredited by the excesses to which it gave rise, as well as by its coldness, poverty, and self-sufficiency. A reaction ensued of which Napoleon took advantage, and to which Chateaubriand's 'Génie du Christianisme' gave an immense impulse, as much because of its opportuneness as of its ability. Crowds flocked to the reopened churches; Catholicism regained favour. Napoleon's despotic conduct towards the Catholic clergy and the Pope seriously injured the Gallicanism which he supported, greatly strengthened the Ultramontanism which he opposed, and gave popularity and influence to the writings and ideas of De Maistre and De Bonald. The sceptical and atheistical views which had been current in the eighteenth century were, of course, widely held during the period of the Empire, but they were not allowed expression, and only found vent after the Restoration when clerical and political reactionaries stirred up slumbering revolutionary passions. Madame de Staël, Benjamin Constant, and others like-minded, while not acknowledging supernatural revelation, warmly advocated the claims of religion, and insisted that religious faith was not merely intellectual assent, but also emotion, affection, and self-surrender, a conscious experience of life in God. Since the Restoration the religious condition of France has been very unstable and fluctuating. Religious independence and reasonableness are comparatively little diffused, and those who possess them are with-

[1] On the history of philosophy in France during the present century see M. Ph. Damiron, 'Essai sur l'histoire de la Philosophie en France au xixe siècle,' 3d ed. 1835; F. Ravaisson, 'La Philosophie en France au xixe siècle,' 1867, 3d ed. 1889; and M. Ferraz, 'Histoire de la Philosophie en France au xixe siècle;' 'Socialisme, Naturalisme, et Positivisme,' 1877; 'Traditionalisme et Ultramontanisme,' 3d ed. 1880; 'Spiritualisme et Liberalisme,' 1887.

out the union, the organisation, and the enthusiasm necessary to spread spiritual truth and freedom among a people. Clericalism is admirably organised and indefatigably active. It abounds in means and agents of propagandism, and can point to many good works done and excellent institutions maintained; but it spreads false and degrading superstitions, is unscrupulous where its own interests are concerned, and is hopelessly committed to the denial of rights and liberties essential alike to individuals and to nations. The more it gains ground and displays its true character, the more there is evoked a bitter and passionate spirit of unbelief and irreligion, which far overshoots its mark, confounds truth and error, good and evil, and by its blindness and violence increases and consolidates the power of the enemy which it seeks to destroy. Throughout the present century the religious question has been keenly agitated in France; and the course of its discussion has naturally had a very considerable influence on the general course and character of French historical reflection. All thoughtful Frenchmen recognise that the question has as yet been only superficially and inadequately answered.[1]

The changes which philosophy and religion underwent were accompanied by a corresponding change in literature. For more than two hundred years the so-called classical style had been alone cultivated. The boldest innovators of the eighteenth century did not dream of emancipating themselves from the rules based on the assumption of its exclusive legitimacy. Rousseau and Diderot, B. de Saint Pierre and A. Chenier, were, indeed, precursors of the coming change, but unconsciously. With the opening years of the present century, however, there began to make itself felt throughout France, as throughout the rest of Europe, a new life which the old literary forms could not contain or satisfy. It was a freer and richer, a more natural and yet subtler life, and it originated a movement of revolt against the inherited traditions and conventions,

[1] De Pressensé's 'L'Église et la Revolution,' D'Haussonville's 'L'Église romaine et le premier Empire,' and A. Leroy Beaulieu's 'Les Catholiques libéraux et l'Église de France depuis 1830 à nos jours' ('Rev. des Deux Mondes,' tom. lxiv. and lxvi.), form a good introduction to a study of the religious situation, and of the successive phases assumed by the ecclesiastical question in France during the nineteenth century.

—a movement which claimed for the ideal and infinite a fuller recognition, and for imagination a wider sphere of activity, which did not hesitate to employ hitherto unused modes of expression and to convey hitherto unfelt sentiments, and which thus at once enfranchised speech and enriched thought. Its representatives, with Victor Hugo at their head, have renewed French literature in all its forms, and shown that the French mind and language are abundantly endowed with powers which they were not previously suspected to possess. Victor Hugo has been, perhaps, as much the literary king of the nineteenth century as Voltaire was of the eighteenth. Romanticism greatly affected historiography; in fact, it so quickened the historical imagination and so enlarged historical sympathy as almost to transform history into a new art. It is not likely that the spirit of Romanticism, after having for half a century pervaded and leavened French literature, will be ever again wholly expelled from it. But during the last twenty years it has ceased to be its chief inspiration. At present Naturalism or Realism is predominant in all departments of literary art.[1]

The political spirit of France in the nineteenth century has likewise not been what it was in the eighteenth century. It has been considerably less self-confident and dogmatic, much more hesitating and opportunist; it has learned not to despise "accomplished facts" and "the powers that be." The politicians of the Revolution, and the philosophers who were their teachers, started from faith in certain principles which they held to be ultimate, certain rights which they regarded as inalienable, and from these they deductively reached codes and constitutions which they deemed alone legitimate and unconditionally applicable. They laid comparatively little stress on historical considerations. It is a common notion, at least outside of France, that this is still the way in which Frenchmen deal with political questions and affairs, owing to an inveterate characteristic which unfavourably distinguishes the French from the English and German mind. The political history of France in the present century does not support this notion. The weakness most conspicuous in French political practice since the Restoration has been excessive distrust

[1] See G. Pellissier, 'Le Mouvement Littéraire au xixe Siècle,' 1889.

of reason and principle, excessive deference to history and precedent. Whereas in the revolutionary period men too commonly acted as if free-will were omnipotent, as if the ideal could be realised in all circumstances, and as if the past could be prevented from influencing the present or the future, they have since very widely assumed that there is no other truth than that of fact and success, that history is a process of fatalistic evolution, and that both universal rights and individual efforts are of little moment. The political doctrines which have found favour in France among our contemporaries and their immediate predecessors have been mostly based on the interpretation or misinterpretation of history, not drawn by deduction from true or false principles. The connection between history and politics has been nowhere so close as in France. While in Germany the course of historical theorising has been mainly determined by the movement of philosophy, in France it has been chiefly affected by the interests and vicissitudes of politics.

Further, the spirit of the eighteenth century decidedly inclined towards individualism, whereas that of the nineteenth century has, on the whole, tended towards socialism. The great aim of the men of the eighteenth century was to secure the rights and liberties of individuals, to remove burdens, to destroy privileges and inequalities, to weaken the power of the State and to limit the sphere of its action. It was predominantly negative and destructive. When the Restoration allowed opinion freely to manifest itself, it was seen that this was no longer its general character. What all the great parties in France were beheld to be aiming at was construction, organisation. The Ultramontanists or Theocratists were denouncing the ages of private judgment; and were urging that authority should be re-established, and that society should be built up anew, on the basis on which it had rested previous to the Renaissance and the Reformation. The Socialists, while maintaining these ages to be transitionally necessary, and denying that humanity could be reasonably expected to return to its medieval condition, admitted that the epoch of private judgment, the critical epoch, ought not to be prolonged, but that an organic epoch should be introduced: hence their schemes for the suppression of poverty through the organisa-

tion of industry. The Constitutionalists of all shades were at one in maintaining that society ought to be regarded as an organic system, in which all interests should be duly recognised and guarded, and all forces properly distributed and harmonised. The characteristic referred to has been especially conspicuous in the economic domain. The condition of the labouring population in France became soon after the Restoration very different from what it had been previous to the Revolution or under the Empire. As regards the class occupied with agriculture, its position was greatly improved in consequence of the changes effected by the Revolution. But it lost its relative importance. Mechanical inventions, chemical discoveries, and the applications of steam, electricity, &c., to the furtherance of production, gave vast dimensions to manufactures and trade, led to a redistribution of population, and, in fact, brought about an industrial revolution as socially influential as the political one which had been so violent and manifest. It called into existence a fourth estate more formidable than the third estate, in the interests of which mainly the Revolution had been effected. It raised questions which no legislation about land, taxes, or privileges of birth and rank could settle,—questions as to the right of private property itself, as to the justice of the gains of capital employed by individuals in any circumstances, and as to the duty of attempting to reconstitute and reorganise society with a view to the suppression of competition and the extinction of poverty. The desire, in many instances so passionately intense as to be akin to religious fanaticism, for a revolution, social rather than political, and more comprehensive and constructive than that with which the eighteenth century closed, has taken a general and tenacious hold of the industrial population of France since the Restoration, and has been the cause or occasion of infinite perplexity, of great calamities, and of many and strange speculations and schemes.

France, in passing through the changes indicated, has moved with the movement, and lived in the life, of Europe. The nations which constitute the European system have never been less isolated, or more manifoldly and intimately connected, than in the nineteenth century. And France has, at

least since 1815, been singulalry open and susceptible to ideas and influences coming from without. While largely giving to the nations around her, she has as largely received from them. She has done nothing entirely by herself. She has produced unaided and alone neither her philosophy nor her science, literature, art, or industry. Her philosophy has been drawn to some extent from Scottish, English, Spanish, and Italian sources, and to a still greater extent from German sources. The rise of romanticism in French literature was due to causes which affected all Europe, and which made themselves felt in Britain and Germany even earlier than in France. The discussion of social and religious questions in France has been influenced by their agitation in neighbouring countries. The students of physical science and of historical research are throughout all Europe in incessant communication, fellow-workers in a commonwealth of which the limits are far wider than those of nationality, and of which the members must be on the alert to know what all others similarly engaged are accomplishing.

The foregoing considerations will find ample confirmation in the succeeding portion of this volume.

II.

The rule of Napoleon was extremely unfavourable to historical study; but even under his reign the classical and ideological school had three worthy representative historians in Daunou, Ginguené, and Michaud.

Daunou was born in 1761. He belonged in early life to the Congregation of the Oratory; played an active and honourable part in the Revolution; and was keeper of the archives under Bonaparte. After 1819 he taught history in the College of France for many years; was elected perpetual secretary of the Academy of Inscriptions in 1838; was raised to the peerage in 1839; and died in 1840. He was thoroughly imbued with the ideas of the eighteenth century, while a Benedictine in his habits. He was of a firm and independent character; strongly opposed the condemnation of Louis XVI. to death; and was

the reverse of subservient to Napoleon, although he lent him important aid in his controversy with the Pope. His best historical work was done in connection with the 'Histoire Littéraire de France.' The 'Discours sur l'état des Lettres au xiiie siècle,' which fills most of the sixteenth volume, is especially remarkable; and that not merely for its erudition and clearness of exposition, but even, considering its author's aversion to the medieval spirit, for its impartiality.[1]

Ginguené (1748-1816) was also a contributor to the 'Histoire Littéraire de France,' but his claim to remembrance rests chiefly on his 'Histoire Littéraire d'Italie' (9 vols., 1811-19). In this work he depicted the intellectual development of Italy from the close of the thirteenth to the close of the sixteenth century, giving a full and interesting, although undoubtedly a generally too favourable, account of the literary products of the whole of that time. His work is indeed based on, and even largely borrowed from, that of Tiraboschi, but it has also merits exclusively its own, and is still a book with which the student of Italian literature cannot dispense.

Michaud (1767-1839), we are told by his *collaborateur* and biographer Poujoulat, "spent almost every moment of twenty of the best years of his life" on his 'History of the Crusades.' The result was an immense addition to what was previously known regarding these extraordinary and eventful movements.

Madame de Staël and the Viscount de Chateaubriand initiated in France the literature distinctive of the nineteenth century. Both exerted a powerful influence on the development even of French historical literature.

Madame de Staël (1746-1817) has a place apart among the illustrious women of the nineteenth century. As a literary artist she may, perhaps, have been equalled or surpassed by George Sand, or George Eliot, or some others of her sex; but not in personal greatness or general influence. No other woman of the century has shown the same force of intellect, as wide a range of culture, as firm and comprehensive a grasp of the principles on which social stability and progress depend, or a will as energetic in defence of them, and as resolutely and

[1] Daunou has been admirably appreciated by Mignet, and unjustly depreciated by Sainte-Beuve. See also Picavet, 'Les Idéologues,' pp. 399-408.

righteously defiant towards a seemingly omnipotent despotism. She owes her unique position, notwithstanding some French defects and feminine weaknesses, not less to her greatness and generosity of heart, and her strength and nobility of character, than to her brilliance and vigour of intellect. Here, of course, I have only to indicate how her writings concern the art or the science of history. Her 'De la Littérature considerée dans ses rapports avec les institutions sociales' (1800) showed how much she had been influenced by Rousseau as a writer, but also how much she was his superior in political and historical intelligence. It assigned to literature its due place in society and history, insisting on its importance to them, and pointing out how poor and dull they must be without it. It exhibited in a clear light the closeness of the connection between the development of literature and of society, and established that literature could not be judged of aright by merely examining its products in themselves, apart from the social medium in which, and the social influences under which, they came into being. It thus made manifest the insufficiency of literary criticism as it had hitherto been practised, and the necessity of adopting that comparative and historical method which Villemain, Sainte-Beuve, Taine, and others, have since so successfully employed. It likewise maintained that progress in literature required an originality which could only be attained by having recourse to fresh fountains of inspiration, and by absorbing new elements of life; and that French literature, in particular, needed for its reinvigoration to avail itself more of what the Christian spirit and Germanic thought and imagination could supply it with. The idea that the history of literature, like that of humanity in general, is ruled by a law of perfectibility, pervades the whole book, and is presented with some exaggeration. 'Corinne' (1807), although a romance, helped to correct and enlarge historical thought by the views which it gave of the significance of the fine arts in human life, and of the place and mission of Italy among the nations. 'L'Allemagne' (1810) was a still greater event. It was marvellously successful in revealing to Europe the originality and interest of German philosophy and literature, and in preparing the way for their serious and sympathetic study.

It broke down, as Goethe has observed, the wall of intellectual separation between France and Germany, to the great benefit of both. The 'Considérations sur la Révolution française' (1818), although an unfinished book, not well planned or proportioned, and too much of an apotheosis of Necker, is characterised, on the whole, by a power of insight and of comprehension greater even than had been displayed in any of Madame de Staël's previous writings. The causes of the Revolution are accurately indicated; its principal events are impartially judged; its faults and crimes are condemned as they deserve, while due allowance is made for circumstances; its bad and its good effects are alike exhibited; and the conditions of orderly and free government are admirably expounded.[1]

Madame de Staël was the leader and inspirer of all among her French-speaking contemporaries who held fast to what had been true in the Revolution, and who maintained the cause of unlicentious liberty and constitutional government. Two of her friends did good service as historians. Sismondi (1773-1842) devoted almost fifty years of a laborious existence to historical research and composition. His 'Histoire des Républiques Italiennes du Moyen Age' (16 vols., 1807-1818) is perhaps his best work; but his 'Histoire des Français' (31 vols., 1821-1844) was much superior to any previous history of France. Benjamin Constant (1767-1837) was a practical politician, not a professional historian, but he wrote a history of religion from a point of view both new and true. His 'De la Religion, considerée dans sa source, ses formes et ses développements' (5 vols., 1824-1831), traces the progress of the sentiment which he holds to be the constituent element of religion, as it purifies and perfects itself without ceasing, and creates and destroys a multitude of dogmatic and ecclesiastical systems on its way towards full satisfaction. It was one of the earliest attempts to treat religion simply as a psychological and historical phenomenon. The merits of the conception may atone for considerable defects of execution.

Chateaubriand (1768-1848), while inferior to Madame de

[1] The literature regarding Madame de Staël is vast. The best works belonging to it are indicated by M. Albert Sorel in his comprehensive and excellent book, 'Madame de Staël,' published in the series of 'Les Grands Écrivains Français.'

Staël in understanding and character, had more of the temperament of genius, more of the spirit of poetry, a keener feeling of beauty, higher gifts of imagination, and finer powers of expression. He did sore injustice to his real greatness by an inordinate desire of appearing great, and marred the effect even of chivalrous and magnanimous actions of which few but himself were capable by his excessive love of effect. If he failed, however, as a politician, he succeeded in exerting vast influence as a man of letters. His earliest work, the 'Essai sur les Révolutions' (1797), is interesting to a student of his personal history from the date and circumstances of its composition, its sceptical and melancholy tone, and even its immature and chaotic character; but as a treatment of its theme it can only be regarded as an incoherent rhapsody. The doctrine of perfectibility is scouted. It is declared that the human race has not made a step of progress in the moral sciences; and that even the principles of the physical sciences, in which alone there has been any advance, may easily be denied. His 'Génie du Christianisme' (1802) had an immense effect in recommending Catholicism to the popular imagination and heart. It was an apology for Catholicism, not for Christianity. Far from attempting to distinguish in Catholicism the Christian from the unchristian elements, it assumed it to be Christian throughout, and endeavoured by appeals to fancy and feeling to show how beautiful, consoling, and strengthening it had been, and was fitted to be, in all its beliefs and practices. It was most skilfully accommodated to the state of the public mind when it appeared, exquisitely adapted to secure the immediate end which it actually attained, and written with a beauty and charm of style previously unknown in French prose; but it lacked the inner truthfulness without which the glory of art must pass away before the scrutiny of reason as the flower of the grass withereth under the heat of the sun. Its influence was, therefore, extensive rather than intensive, wide but not enduring. No work published in France, however, contributed so much to discredit the eighteenth-century estimate of the middle ages, and of their institutions. The 'Martyrs' (1809) were the opening of a new epoch in historical composition. Greek and Christian life were there beautifully depicted, and the Franks marched to

battle fierce and terrible as when they conquered the Gauls and the Romans. It is well known how the vivid descriptions of this work, and Sir Walter Scott's 'Ivanhoe,' acted on the imagination of young Augustin Thierry, and influenced his choice of a career. They thus directly contributed to give to France the greatest of historical narrators, one of the most illustrious chiefs of the modern historical school. The principal historical production of Chateaubriand is his 'Études Historiques,' 4 vols., 1836 (Œuvres Complètes, iv.-vii.) It is unfinished and fragmentary, and has been the least read of his works. It shows want of thoroughness in research, numerous marks of haste in the form of small inaccuracies, and a decided preference for striking versions of incidents to those which are more prosaic but better authenticated. On the other hand, as regards simplicity, vividness, and agreeableness of style, it is surpassed by few histories of the graphic, narrative kind. The preface, dated 1831, is of special interest. It indicates the characteristics of a large number of French historians. It gives a slight account of Vico's historical philosophy (pp. 47-50). It vigorously criticises and refutes the fatalistic theory of history attributed to Thiers and Mignet, and the theory of the Terror propounded by Jacobin historians (pp. 74-88). It states the reasons which may be assigned for preferring any of the various species of history, but maintains that no one is exclusively valid; that they may be profitably combined; and that each historian should follow the natural bent of his own genius. The book professed to be pervaded and unified by a comprehensive and original philosophical idea. It claimed to rest the whole system of humanity on the triple basis of religious, philosophical, and political truth; to judge of the progress in history by the measure of the appropriation of these three kinds of truth; and to refer to them all the facts of history according as there is between them conflict, separation, or harmony. But this idea is left vague and undeveloped; it does not penetrate, inspire, or mould the history. In the 'Études,' I may add, Chateaubriand appears as a decided believer in progress. Notwithstanding his faith in Legitimacy, there could never be any doubt of his regard for liberty.[1]

[1] On Chateaubriand see Villemain, 'Le Tribune Moderne, M. de Chateaubriand,'

The great masters who initiated in France the various forms of the historiography distinctive of the nineteenth century were Augustin Thierry, De Barante, Guizot, Mignet, Thiers, and Michelet.

Augustin Thierry (1795-1826) almost perfected historiography as a literary art. He has no superior as an animated and picturesque narrator. There is in his style and mode of treating a subject a simplicity, breadth, and vividness, a charm and a force, which remind us of Homer. His 'Conquête de l'Angleterre par les Normands' casts a spell over the reader not unlike that of 'Ivanhoe' itself. His 'Récits des Temps Merovingiens' gave to ages which had previously seemed the dullest and dreariest imaginable an interest which has stimulated to various fruitful researches, and which has not yet passed away. In his 'Lettres sur l'histoire de France,' he showed with rare effectiveness in what respects the older historians, when dealing with the medieval period of French history, had failed to satisfy the requirements of historical investigation and exposition; and he exhibited in the clearest light what these requirements were. In his maturest work, the 'Essai sur l'histoire de la formation et des progrès du Tiers État,' he entered on a path which Guizot had opened, and followed it up with a success which has excited many to emulation. He fully recognised that the historian should be content only with the oldest and most reliable testimony; and he constantly referred in support of his statements to what he believed to be such testimony. His historical criticism, however, was weak. He often failed sufficiently to sift the evidence; often took false for true witnesses; often failed to observe the order and relationship in which those whom he adduced as authorities stood to one another and to the facts. At times his imagination outran his knowledge. And even his sympathy with the weak and vanquished exercised a disturbing influence on his sense of historical justice. This was in a considerable measure the cause why he represented the history of England to so exaggerated an extent as the history of a conflict between Saxons and Normans, and that of France as the history of a conflict between Gauls and

1858; Sainte-Beuve, 'Chateaubriand et son Groupe Littéraire sous l'Empire,' 1861; and the article on Chateaubriand in Sir A. Alison's Essays.

Franks. M. Amedée Thierry, by his 'Histoire des Gaulois,' 'Histoire de la Gaule sous l'administration romaine,' 'Récits de l'histoire romaine au ive et ve siècles,' 'Histoire de Saint-Jerome,' &c., has rendered scarcely less valuable services to historical study than his illustrious brother.

M. de Barante (1782-1866) published in 1824 his 'Histoire des Ducs de Burgogne de la maison de Valois.' It is purely narrative, and composed in the style, and largely even in the words, of the primary authorities, Froissart and other chroniclers of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. It seemed to him that the history of the period with which he had undertaken to deal could not be otherwise reproduced with so much exactness and circumstantiality, so much natural life and local colour. He did not deem it expedient to pronounce on the moral character of the events which he describes; but this was not owing to moral indifference in himself, but because he believed that when events are properly described readers may with advantage be left to form their own estimate of them. He did not deny that other methods of dealing with history than his own were legitimate, so long as they involved no perversion of facts in support of preconceived opinions and party interests; he only held that the method which he himself employed ought to precede others, inasmuch as faithful narrative is what is fundamental in historiography. He fully recognised the necessity of a strict preliminary criticism of the sources. The preface to his work expounds the theory on which he proceeded, and deserves careful perusal. Some of his critics obviously did not take the trouble to read it. In addition to his chief work, he wrote a widely known book on the French literature of the eighteenth century, histories of the National Convention and of the Directory, and many *études* of an historical and biographical kind.

A new era in the philosophical study of history was initiated by Guizot, of whom we shall have to treat in a subsequent chapter.

M. Mignet (1796-1884) held for sixty years the first place among the political historians of his country. He is the Ranke of France, and his works display the same admirable qualities which distinguish those of the great German historian. They

are based on the closest study of sources of which many were previously unknown or unused, and characterised by scrupulous accuracy of statement, keen and comprehensive disclosure of the causes which determine the course of events, felicitous and prudent generalisation, perfect impartiality, masterly arrangement, and a style which, although sparingly coloured, unheated by passion, and seldom irradiated by the play of imagination, is singularly translucent, harmonious, and graceful. Most of these features are conspicuous even in the work of his youth, the 'Histoire de la Révolution française,' 1824; they are still more so in those works which relate to the sixteenth century, the chief field of his researches,—'Antonio Perez et Philippe II.,' 'Histoire de Marie Stuart,' 'Rivalité de François Ier et de Charles-Quint,' 'Charles-Quint, son abdication,' &c. The 'Mémoire sur la conversion de la Germanie,' the 'Mémoire sur la formation territoriale de notre pays,' and the 'Mémoire sur l'établissement de la réforme religieuse et la constitution du Calvinisme à Genève,' are fine specimens of philosophical history. Chateaubriand accused M. Mignet, as well as his friend M. Thiers, of teaching historical fatalism. And the charge has been repeated by other critics. A semblance of support can be found for it in some insufficiently guarded expressions of 'The History of the French Revolution.' But although M. Mignet believed in the action of general causes and the power of general ideas and passions in history, in the existence of laws of history, and in the guidance and sovereignty of Providence, and may have at times expressed his belief in them even too absolutely, no one who has made himself acquainted with his system of thought as a whole can doubt that he also held the free agency and moral responsibility of individuals as unquestionable truths. He has, in fact, repeatedly insisted that it is an historian's prime and imperative duty, while exhibiting order and causation and law in history, not to leave the impression that they are exclusive of contingency, liberty, and merit or demerit. It is sufficient to refer to the 'Éloge' on Hallam as of itself conclusive on this point.[1]

[1] See M. Jules Simon's 'Notice sur Mignet,' and M. Edouard Petit's 'François Mignet,' 1889.

Shortly before M. Mignet's 'Histoire de la Révolution française' appeared, M. Thiers published the first volume of a far more extensive work on the same event. M. Thiers and M. Mignet were united in the closest friendship and were ardent believers in the same political principles. Accordingly, their Histories gave substantially the same estimate of the Revolution. But otherwise they differed greatly. M. Mignet's History is an epitome or summary; that of M. Thiers is a detailed narrative and exposition. The former is written in a style remarkable for literary finish; in the latter M. Thiers wrote as he would have spoken—with marvellous ease, lucidity, animation, and fulness of knowledge, but also with the faults inseparable from extemporisation, a certain looseness of arrangement, diffuseness of statement, and want of minute accuracy. M. Thiers' choice of his subject was obviously determined both by patriotic and party feeling. He wished to do justice to a great event in his country's history and as much harm as he could to his political opponents, the admirers and upholders of absolute authority and despotic government. He succeeded, perhaps, even better in the latter aim than in the former. The work was a terrible blow to the royalist reactionaries; its immense popularity was an overwhelming revelation of the hopelessness of their policy. As to the Revolution itself, he did it, in my opinion, considerably more than justice, and excused much which should have been condemned. At the same time I regard it as substantially just, and a great advance towards complete justice. I can by no means subscribe to the following judgment passed upon the work by Mr Carlyle, writing in 1837: "Thiers' History, in ten volumes foolscap octavo, contains, if we remember rightly, one reference; and that to a book, not to the page or chapter of a book. It has, for these last seven or eight years, a wide or even high reputation; which latter it is as far as possible from meriting. A superficial air of order, of clearness, calm candour, is spread over the work; but inwardly, it is waste, inorganic; no human head that honestly tries can conceive the French Revolution *so*. A critic of our acquaintance undertook, by way of bet, to find four errors per hour in Thiers; he won amply on the first trial or two. And yet readers (we must add), taking all this along with them,

may peruse Thiers with comfort in certain circumstances, nay even with profit; for he is a brisk man of his sort; and does tell you much, if you knew nothing." Mr Carlyle did not recollect rightly. M. Thiers may have given too few references; he tells us that he gave them only on points likely to be disputed; but there are at least a hundred, and most of them are sufficiently definite. It has to be remembered likewise that the books to which he could refer were few; that his sources were the 'Moniteur,' some Memoirs nearly all unedited, and the testimony of ocular witnesses; and that it was his work and Mignet's which gave rise to that extraordinary outpouring of publications on the French Revolution which has since proceeded without interruption. So far from its being the case that "no human head that honestly tries can conceive the French Revolution" as M. Thiers represented it, all who have come after him (Mr Carlyle included) have conceived the great bulk and main course of the events composing it *so;* while as regards interpretations of it, M. Thiers' is, after due discount for exaggeration, the one which is still most widely accepted, whereas all Mr Carlyle's genius has been unable to make the view that it was simply a hideous, fantastic, and meaningless imbroglio, essentially sheer chaos and bankruptcy, credible to any thoughtful human being. M. Thiers' strong point was not accuracy in details, and his History was disfigured by a number of errors due to haste or carelessness; but the most scrupulous and laborious carefulness would not have saved him from falling into many errors which would be obvious to critics who had consulted sources of information inaccessible to him. Mr Carlyle had an immense capacity of taking pains; yet after M. Louis Blanc had utilised those collections of pamphlets and documents in the British Museum at which Mr Carlyle, standing on a ladder, merely looked, a reviewer even of Mr Carlyle's 'French Revolution' could have no difficulty in finding in it many times four errors. The 'History of the French Revolution' by Thiers will not only tell much to those who know nothing, but may be read with profit even by those who have studied the Histories of Carlyle and Michelet, Blanc and Taine. His 'Histoire du Consulat et de l'Empire' is a still abler work. It is, perhaps, the most interesting

history ever written on the same scale. No reader of it felt its twenty volumes to be too many. For the author had in perfection the art of presenting a vast array of facts in their natural order; of describing a multitude of incidents in a most graphic and animated manner, while never allowing the unity of the whole to which they belonged or the co-ordination of its facts to drop out of sight. He had above all men the precise kind of talent required adequately to exhibit and explain the military achievements, the financial measures, and the policy of Napoleon; and he did full justice to his talent, being only too much in love with his theme. His 'History of the Consulate and the Empire' had the same fault, however, as his 'History of the Revolution.' The fault arose from excess of a virtue,—from the intensity of patriotism which was so marked a characteristic of M. Thiers. He was a man who would have sacrificed his own life or any number of lives, broken any law, or crushed any nation, if he could thereby have secured the safety or glory of France. Moved by his predominant passion he has too often made his histories apologies for, or eulogies of, the Revolution and Napoleon when both deserved condemnation. What was the result? His 'History of the Revolution' gave an immense impulse to a delirious apotheosis of the Revolution which has done incalculable harm to France; his 'History of the Consulate and the Empire' to a not less insane and pernicious Cæsarism; and his own public life was largely a struggle with the two monsters of which he had been, in part at least, the Frankenstein. History serves patriotism best when she maintains a severe impartiality and critical independence of judgment, and tells the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, however unpleasant to patriotism that may be.[1]

Of M. Michelet's work as an historian I shall have to treat at a later stage.

Most of the initiators of the French historiography of the nineteenth century were granted long lives and the full possession of their powers of mental work to the last. Some of them have only recently passed away, after having presided over almost its whole development. I shall make no attempt to trace that development, or to give even the most general survey of the

[1] See M. Jules Simon's 'Notice sur Thiers,' and M. Paul de Rémusat's 'Thiers.'

historical work done in France since Thierry and Guizot, Thiers and Mignet, commenced their labours. The study of history has during no other period been cultivated with equal enthusiasm and success. And among the nations which have most fully displayed their genius in this form of intellectual activity France has been among the most conspicuous, and probably surpassed only by Germany. There are few fields of history in which Frenchmen have not made fruitful investigations; few epochs or great events of history on which they have not shed fresh light. They have actively contributed to those sciences of recent growth by which the darkness shrouding prehistoric time has been at last in part dispelled; and to those sciences which have been from of old recognised as auxiliaries to historiography. Knowledge of the history of China has been promoted by such scholars as Abel Rémusat, Reinaud, Biot, Julien, Pauthier, and Pavie; of India by Burnouf, Langlois, De Tassy, Foucaux, Saint-Hilaire, Feer, and Regnaud; of Persia by De Sacy, Defrémery, Mohl, and Gobineau; of Assyria and Babylonia by Oppert, Fresnel, Lenormant, and Ménant; of Egypt by Champollion-Figeac, Letronne, De Rougé, Mariette, Chabas, Naville, and Maspero; and of the Semitic peoples by Munk, Franck, De Perceval, De Saulcy, De Slane, Quatremère, Sedillot, Fournel, Renan, Reuss, Derembourg, D'Eichtal, and Vernes. As regards the history of the classical world, the names of Ampère, Boissier, Bouché-Leclercq, Brunet de Presle, Coulanges, Desvergier, Duruy, Egger, Girard, Guigniaut, Havet, Le Clerc, Maury, Perrot, Renier, Waddington, and Wallon, are but a few out of the many names which recall eminent services rendered in this department. The languages, literatures, institutions, sciences, arts, philosophies, and religions of classical antiquity have all been separately treated of historically in numerous learned writings. It is, however, the history of France itself which has been most cultivated. Three general histories of France have succeeded Sismondi's,—those of Michelet, Martin, and Dareste. Michelet's is a work of great but unequal genius, of singular merits and serious faults; Martin's is not a work of genius, but of talent of a high order, of an intelligence always clear, vigorous, and alert, and of a conscientiousness without flaw; and Dareste's, also, is a work

of much research and ability. There is likewise a general 'History of French Civilisation' by M. Alfred Rambaud, in the three unpretentious volumes of which is to be found more of vitally important information as to the growth of France than in any twenty other volumes which I could name. The study of the medieval period of French history in all its aspects is, however, that in which the energies of Frenchmen of learning have been most zealously devoted since Guizot and Thierry set the example, and the *École des Chartes*, the *Comité des travaux historiques*, and the *Société de l'histoire de France*, were founded. Among the names which most readily occur to me in this connection are those of Beugnot, Boutaric, Chéruel, Coulanges, Dareste, Delisle, Hauréau, Jubainville, Levasseur, Littré, Luce, Luchaire, Mas-Latrie, Montalembert, Gaston and Paulin Paris, Perrens, Picot, Poinsignon, Raynouard, Ray, and Raoul Rosières. In addition to Guizot, Michelet, Mignet, and Thiers, I shall mention as having distinguished themselves by works on the modern history of France only the Dukes D'Aumale and De Broglie, Louis Blanc, Aimé Chérest, Claretie, Pierre Clément, Taxile Delord, Feillet, Duvergier, De Hauranne, Mortimer-Terneaux, Nettement, Quinet, Rousset, Sainte-Beuve, Sorel, Taine, and Tocqueville. We owe to MM. Himly, Geffroy, Perrens, Rambaud, Rosseuw Saint-Hilaire, and Zeller well reputed works on the history of the formation of the States of Central Europe, and on the histories of the Scandinavian States, Florence, Russia, Spain, and Germany and Italy.

There has not only been the most manifold activity in French historiography during the period under consideration, but also in essential respects manifest improvement. To observe it, however, we must not look from a merely artistic point of view. So regarded, Thierry's 'Norman Conquest' and the earlier volumes of Michelet's History have not only not been surpassed, but have not been equalled. The excellencies of form and style displayed by Mignet and Thiers have not reappeared in the same degree in any of their disciples. Yet there has been progress, and even great progress. There has been the progress involved in a continuous subdivision of labour and an immense multiplication of researches. There has been a decided progress in method. The obligations of

the historian not to depend on secondary sources of information, but to have recourse to the primary sources, and as far as possible to master and exhaust them all, have been steadily becoming more fully recognised; and the necessity for stringency in criticism and exactitude in interpretation has been growingly felt. And there has been also progress in truthfulness and impartiality of judgment. One reason why the historians of to-day are comparatively averse to generalisation, to high colouring, to the exercise of imagination, and to eloquent writing, is that they are more conscious than their predecessors of the extent to which these things have falsified history. The younger race of historians are more emancipated than those who preceded them from the prejudices of party, of country, and of creed; and more anxious to keep all their feelings and convictions under such control as will prevent them vitiating their investigations. They have come to learn that the supreme law of history is not to be attractive and beautiful, or helpful to patriotism, morality, and religion, but to be wholly and exactly true; and that, therefore, the historian is primarily bound to be critical and scientific, and only secondarily bound to be artistic and edifying.

The various modes or systems of thought which have in France during the period we are considering given rise to theories or philosophies of history have likewise produced histories. The histories exemplify in their own way the principles maintained in the theories. And therefore it seems desirable to indicate the chief works of history thus connected with the theories which are to be expounded in the chapters that follow.

The theocratist and ultramontanist party has had among its adherents in France no historians of great distinction. Rohrbacher, author of an ecclesiastical history in twenty volumes which has taken the place of the much more deserving work of Fleury, is, perhaps, the most eminent; but he is deplorably wanting in candour and justice. Liberal Catholicism, on the other hand, has had among its representatives such historians as Montalembert, Ozanam, Riancey, and De Broglie.

Louis Blanc is by far the greatest historian which French Socialism can claim. The 'Parliamentary History of the

Revolution' drawn up by MM. Roux and Buchez is valuable on account of the documents which it contains, but what M. Buchez contributed to it of his own is very incoherent and extravagant stuff. M. Benoit Malon, formerly a member of the International and the Parisian Commune, has written a 'History of Socialism' remarkably full of information, and laudably fair, except to those who are wholly outside the household of the socialistic faith.

A large number of French historians have acknowledged Guizot, the chief of the doctrinaire school, as their master. Once the acknowledgment meant that those who made it accepted the principles of the historico-political creed which Guizot maintained; latterly it has seldom meant more than that those making it regard themselves as following up the path of historical investigation into which he led so many. Historians like Count de Carné, De Tocqueville, and H. Martin may be reckoned among his disciples.

The Eclectic school had for basis a philosophical doctrine, and its members have cultivated the history of philosophy with more zeal and success than those of any philosophical school of this century except the Hegelian. Cousin, Jouffroy, De Rémusat, Saisset, Damiron, Matter, Wilm, Saint-Hilaire, Franck, Nourisson, Janet, Bouillier, Caro, Simon, Vacherot, and many of their associates and disciples, have greatly distinguished themselves as historians of philosophy. If eclecticism has exerted any perverting influence on historical research, it has been very slight compared with that of Hegelianism.

Positivism has had its best representative among French historians in Littré; and Naturalism in Taine.

Granier de Cassagnac and Mortimer-Terneaux may be named as historians of a conservative type, desirous of supporting the cause of authority. Napoleon III. wrote his 'Histoire de Jules César' in order to recommend Cæsarism. Lamartine, Michelet, Quinet, Barni, Lanfrey, and others have sought to spread by their historical writings the principles of Liberalism.

At present most of the younger historians are content to be simply historians. While not denying the legitimacy of historical generalisation, they carefully refrain from treating

history as subservient to the establishment of extra-historical creeds or theories of any kind. It is historians of this stamp who are the contributors to such periodicals as the 'Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes' and the 'Revue Historique.'[1]

It is necessary to notice in this chapter only two works which treat of history. The first is the 'Cours d'Études Historiques' of Daunou, who has been already under our consideration. This 'Cours' comprises twenty volumes published between 1842 and 1849, and is composed of the lectures which the author had delivered as Professor of History at the College of France. Some of the earlier volumes alone are occupied with the methodology of history. The first volume deals directly with it. In the introduction it is maintained that those who cultivate the mental and historical sciences should aim at being as scrupulously exact in observation, as severely analytical in investigation, and as impartial in judgment, as the students of physical science; and that the progress of mental and historical science warrants us to hope that this end may be at least approximately attained. The bulk of the volume (Book I.) is a comprehensive and systematic treatise on historical criticism. It discusses the following subjects,—the certitude or probability attainable in history (chap. i.); the sources of history (chap. ii.); the foundation and propagation of traditions (chap. iii.); the traditional histories of the most celebrated peoples (chap. iv.); the rules of criticism applicable to the traditional past of history (chap. v.); historical monuments (chap. vi.); medals and inscriptions (chap. vii.); charters or pieces of archives (chap. viii.); records made at the moment when the facts took place or a few days after (chap. ix.); records written in the course of the age when the events occurred or shortly afterwards (chap. x.); rules of criticism applicable to contemporary or nearly contemporary records (chap. xi.); and historical collections, abridgments, and extracts (chaps. xii.-xv.) It concludes with a summary of the rules of historical criticism, a statement of the importance of grammatical criticism to the historian, and observations on

[1] On French historiography in the nineteenth century see 'Rapports sur les Études Historiques,' par MM. Geffroy, Zeller, et Thiénot: 1867.

the conditions which must be fulfilled in order that history may become a science. Almost all the matters taken up are carefully and judiciously, learnedly and independently, dealt with. The second book (tom. ii. pp. 1-290) is on the uses of history. Although less satisfactory than the first, the disquisitions which it contains regarding the bearings of historical study on moral and social science, on the knowledge of human nature and of its original and acquired tendencies, on perception of the conditions of domestic, commercial, and civil life, and on political theory and practice, as well as of the bearings of these things on it, are generally sound and luminous. The second volume from p. 291 to its close treats of the history of geography and of geography as auxiliary to history. Volumes iii.-vi. form an extremely elaborate and erudite work on chronology. The bond of connection between these studies on geography and on chronology is that both are regarded as concerned with the classification of historical facts or data—the former, namely, with their distribution in space, and the latter with their arrangement in time. Volume vii. is a treatise on the exposition of historical facts, or, in other words, on the art of writing history. It discusses almost all the relevant points and questions, if not with originality or profundity, certainly with thoughtfulness and good sense. The subsequent volumes contain elaborate disquisitions on the characteristics of eminent historians, and on the contents, merits, and defects of their works. History had not been treated of before, at least in France, in nearly so complete, thorough, and practical a manner as in the lectures of Daunou.

The second work referred to is 'La Méthodologie des Sciences Morales et Politiques appliquée à la Science de l'Histoire' of M. Cros-Mayreville, published in 1848. While Daunou regarded history and all questions relating to it from the point of view of an ideologist of the eighteenth century, Cros-Mayreville looks at them in the light of an age still present with us. But he lacks the intellectual thoroughness and the vast special knowledge of his predecessor. Hence his work is comparatively slight and unsatisfactory. He treats first of the nature of historical facts, of their proofs, and of their criticism; next, of

the reproduction of the facts, especially in the form of general history; then, of the causation, moral succession, and moral appreciation of the facts; further, of the influence of the teaching of general history on the education of peoples, and of the organisation of this teaching; and, finally, of the desiderata and ultimate conclusions of the science of history. On all these points he makes good and useful observations; yet his treatment of none of them is otherwise than very inadequate.

The views on history of various writers on historical science will come before us in several of the chapters which follow.

CHAPTER VI.

THE ULTRAMONTANIST AND LIBERAL CATHOLIC SCHOOLS.

I.

The historical doctrine of what is variously known as the traditionalist, or ultramontane, or theocratic school was advocated in defiance of Napoleon during the whole period of his reign, and appeared to triumph in his fall. Its advocates were moved by a powerful polemical motive, and had immediately in view a partisan purpose; they were as unlike as could be to calm labourers in the field of science. Hence no systematic exposition of their distinctive historical theory is to be found in any of their writings; nor has any member of the French division of the theocratic school given us an elaborated philosophy of history, or, indeed, any philosophy of history simply for its own sake. Their views of the course and destination of human history must be disengaged, disentangled, from an extensive literature composed of works belonging chiefly to the departments of theological and political polemics or apologetics.[1]

I shall try to indicate what these views were as set forth in the writings of the three best representatives of the party,—De Maistre, De Bonald, and De Lamennais during the earlier part of his career.[2]

[1] Damiron and Ferraz have treated of the traditionalist and ultramontanist school in the works already mentioned, and Nettement in his 'Histoire de la Restauration.' I may refer also to Principal Fairbairn's article on "Catholicism and Religious Thought," in 'Cont. Rev.' for May 1885.

[2] A learned Danish baron, M. d'Eckstein, advocated substantially the same views as De Bonald, De Maistre, and De Lamennais, in the pages of 'Le

Count Joseph de Maistre (1754-1821), a Savoyard but of French descent, was a man of strong convictions and fiery zeal; dogmatic, intolerant, and paradoxical in his judgments; a sincere hater of public liberty, and a decided denier of historical progress; a writer of great directness and force, with, as has been said, "something of the eloquence of Rousseau, and something of the wit of Voltaire;" a most formidable polemic, audacious and ingenious, trenchant and sarcastic; and in his private and domestic character, as revealed by his letters, tender and amiable to an extent which the reader of his books alone could never expect. Viscount Louis de Bonald (1754-1840) began his literary career about the same time as De Maistre, and maintained substantially the same views, but his method of thought and style of writing were altogether different, the former being exclusively and rigidly ratiocinative, and the latter slow and heavy in movement, although occasionally not without animation and force. The Abbé de Lamennais (1782-1854) was a greater and more interesting personality than either De Maistre or De Bonald. He was a man who could not rest in doubt or probability; who could not tolerate hesitation or indifference; who must have certitude, and give himself wholly to the cause which he espoused. He had a soul of flame in which reason and passion were combined as light and heat in fire. He was master of a commanding eloquence which made him seem a second Bossuet. His 'Essai sur l'Indifférence' (1818) had a much greater practical influence than all the ultramontanist writings which had previously ap-

Catholique,' a periodical edited and for the most part written by himself. He was, however, much more temperate in his advocacy of them; and, indeed, expressly says of the three chiefs of the theocratic party that "their fear of the Revolution has communicated to their polemic a tincture of reaction which we believe to be neither necessary nor even advantageous to the maintenance of sound doctrines" (tom. i. pp. 8, 9). 'Le Catholique' began to appear in 1826, and extended to twenty volumes, of which I have only seen the first twelve, those being, I understand, all that the library of the British Museum possesses. The most interesting of the studies which they contain are perhaps that on B. Constant's 'De la Religion,' in vols. i. and ii., and that on 'Industrialism,' *i.e.*, Saint-Simonism, in vol. v. D'Eckstein was exceptionally conversant with German learning and speculation, and his periodical must have contributed somewhat to spread the knowledge of them in France. Philarète Chasles, in an amusing page of his 'Mémoires' (tom. i. p. 269), gives personal reminiscences of 'Le Catholique' and its editor.

peared in France put together. It is only the general theory of history contained in the works of these authors which requires to be here exhibited.[1]

Like all decided adherents of the theocratic creed, they had a passionate aversion to the distinctive tenets of the eighteenth century. They looked on that century as an epoch of shame, closing in an event the most horrible the world had seen. They stood too near the Revolution, and had suffered too much through it, to be able to judge it impartially. The terror, the religious and moral delirium, the confiscations, banishment, and bloodshed, which accompanied it, seemed to them of its very essence, and they believed that they could not condemn it sternly enough, nor assail its principles too strongly, nor oppose its influences too resolutely. To meet, conquer, and crush the spirit of the Revolution, was the aim which, under a sincere sense of duty, they set before them.

In proposing to themselves to counteract the Revolution, to root out its principles and undo its effects, they were not blind to the magnitude of their task. They hated the Revolution, but they did not despise it; they recognised that it was

[1] The following are the works from which my exposition of the theocratic theory is drawn: M. de Bonald, 'Théorie du Pouvoir Politique et Religieuse dans la Société Civile,' 1796; 'Essai Analytique sur les Lois Naturelles de l'Ordre Social,' 1800; and 'La Legislation Primitive,' 2d ed., 1821; M. de Maistre, 'Considérations sur la France,' 1796; 'Du Pape,' 1819; 'De l'Église Gallicane,' 1821; 'Les Soirées de Saint Petersbourg,' 1821; and 'Correspondance'; and M. de Lamennais, 'Essai sur l'Indifférence en Matière de la Religion,' 1817-23; 'De la Religion considerée dans ses rapports avec l'Ordre Politique et Civil,' 1825-26; 'Des Progrès de la Révolution et de la Guerre contre l'Église,' 1829; and 'Œuvres Inédites.' A collected edition of De Bonald's works has been several times printed. On De Maistre see the essay of Prof. v. Sybel in his 'Kleine Schriften,' and that of Mr Morley in his 'Critical Miscellanies'; also Janet's 'Philosophie de la Révolution française,' pp. 30-44. In these pages M. Janet has well indicated the indebtedness of De Maistre to Saint-Martin as regards his views of the Revolution. On Saint-Martin the reader may consult M. Caro, 'La Vie et la Doctrine de Saint-Martin,' and M. Franck, 'La Philosophie Mystique au xviiie Siècle.' On Lamennais, besides the 'Essai Biographique' of M. Blaize and the studies of Sainte-Beuve, there are various articles worth consulting—*e.g.*, Jules Simon's in 'Revue des Deux Mondes,' 1841, L. Binaud's in same periodical (Nos. for Aug. 15, 1860, and Feb. 1, 1861), E. Rénan's in 'Essais de Morale et Critique,' Prof. Huber's in his 'Kleine Schriften,' and Prof. Dowden's in 'Fortnightly Review,' Jan. 1, 1869. Cardinal Newman's article on Lamennais in his 'Critical and Historical Miscellanies' is of no value so far as its subject is concerned, but may be of some interest as the work of Newman.

no product of petty causes; they believed it to be the inevitable result of a radically erroneous conception of man's relation to God and to his fellow-men which had been growing and spreading into wrong habits of thought and action from the time of the Renaissance downwards, till at length head, heart, and every member of the body politic were diseased and corrupt. De Maistre, indeed, contended that the Revolution was not a natural event, but "an event unique in history," "a satanic event," "a providential event," "a miracle strictly so called," "a predestinated revolution," "a revolution which impelled men rather than they it." But he thereby meant that it was only intelligible when referred directly to the divine purpose revealed in it; when viewed as an awful expiation for enormous sin. He did not mean that it was an accidental or isolated event, for which there had been no historical preparation. He and De Bonald, even in their earliest works—the two books published in 1796—gave clear expression to the conviction that the roots of the Revolution went far deeper down and farther back than was generally supposed. They set themselves to resist it with the full consciousness that it was but a startling outward phase of an internal, moral, and social revolution which began when the modern world emerged from the medieval world, and was really what had to be combated and overcome. They believed that it could only be opposed successfully if opposed in its principles, and they admitted that in undertaking so to oppose it they proposed to effect a far greater revolution than it had itself been, even nothing less than resettling and reorganising society on a foundation from which it had been gliding with ever-increasing velocity for three centuries. They thus deliberately took up a position of antagonism to modern philosophy and to modern history. "For three hundred years," says De Maistre, "history has been a continuous conspiracy against the truth."

In sensationalism, the dominant philosophy in France during the eighteenth century, the writers under consideration saw one of the most powerful causes of the Revolution and of the crimes associated with it. Against this philosophy, therefore, they waged an unwearied polemic, charging it with degrading man to the level of the brutes, and with leading inevitably to

immorality, anarchy, misrule, and impiety. As, however, they attacked it solely in the interests of the practical life, or, in other words, not as false but as evil, they not only contributed nothing to its philosophical refutation, but assumed and asserted its causal connection with the vices which they denounced, even where proof was most incumbent upon them. The refutation of materialism in De Bonald's 'Recherches sur les Premiers Objets de nos Connaissances Morales,' if an exception to this statement, is the only one.

The writers in question did not stop with opposition to sensationalism. They went on to attack modern philosophy in its principle and entire development. De Maistre wrote a book to prove Bacon a scientific charlatan, and laid it down as a principle that "contempt for Locke is the beginning of knowledge." De Bonald argued that the history of philosophy was nothing else than a history of the variations of philosophical schools, which left no other impression on the reader than an insurmountable disgust at all philosophical researches. A considerable portion of the second volume of the 'Essai' of Lamennais, and the whole of its 'Défense,' were devoted to show that all philosophy since Descartes was radically vicious, —that its method was identical with that employed by religious heretics, and that it ended inevitably in scepticism.

The explanation of this direct and conscious antagonism to modern philosophy is not far to seek, and takes us into the very heart of the theocratic theory. The philosophers of the eighteenth century had advocated the rights of reason or rights of man in a one-sided and exaggerated way: they had given, that is to say, an undue prominence to the principle of individualism; had pushed it too far; and had forgotten the claims of the principle which limits it. The consequences had been terrible. This caused in the way of reaction another party to arise, who could see only the evil which the principle of individualism had caused or occasioned, and who pushed the complementary principle of authority to a farther but contrary extreme. They saw that to make any man, however wise, and still more to make every man, however foolish, believe that any private judgment or private crotchet of his was entitled to as much deference as great institutions which had lasted for

ages, and which were still satisfying in a large measure the reasons of vast masses of men, was not only to make them believe a falsehood, but a falsehood disruptive of the continuity between the present and the past of humanity, and incompatible with the existence of the family, the Church, or the State; one which meant, in fact, the entire dissolution of society. Hence they rushed into the breach to oppose it.

The easiest way, however, of opposing a doctrine, that which first suggests itself, and which at first sight seems the most promising of success, is direct denial of it and the affirmation of the contrary,—the assertion and defence of the antagonistic principle as the exclusive truth. And this was how the reaction combated the Revolution. The principle of individual independence had been taught so as to be scarcely compatible, if not altogether incompatible, with that of social authority; now that of social authority was so taught as to be incompatible with individual independence. Order had been sacrificed to progress; now progress was sacrificed to order. The present had been glorified at the expense of the past; now the past was glorified at the expense of the present. A theocracy was held forth as the very ideal of society, and democracy denounced as an insanity. Passive obedience was represented as the source of all virtue; the exercise of individual independence as the cause of all evil; tradition, supernatural in its origin, as the source of all truth; and free inquiry as the source only of error.

Now, which of these two doctrines, thus held as antagonistic and mutually exclusive, was the truest expression of the spirit of modern thought? There could be but one answer. The men of the reaction themselves could not refuse for a moment to acknowledge that the Revolution was the legitimate heir of the preceding four centuries,—the completest assertion in politics of the same principles which the Renaissance had introduced into literature, the Reformation into religion, and Cartesianism into philosophy. They felt that their own doctrine was ancient as opposed to modern, and they were too honest to conceal or disavow what they felt. On the contrary, they proclaimed their conviction that the last four centuries were wrong in root and branches, and nowhere more obviously wrong than in philo-

sophy, which, if it have no other merits, has at least that of being ever the clearest expression of the spirit of its age. Its systems seemed to them to contradict and destroy one another, and to leave, as they passed in rapid succession, not a wrack behind, because all were based on the hopelessly false foundation that in order to find truth the mind must seek it in itself, in its own consciousness, and differed only as to what principle of the mind, what faculty of the conscious being, should be supposed to have in it the supreme criterion of certainty, whether sense, or feeling, or reason. Cartesians and Baconians, sensationalists and idealists, dogmatists and sceptics, in the judgment of the writers we are speaking of, alike started from the ego or individual consciousness; and to reason from this datum, they were agreed, could only land in universal scepticism, if the reasoning were carried far enough.[1]

The ground, they thought, on which the temple of truth ought to be raised must be sought elsewhere,—not *in* man but *out* of him. And the criterion of truth, they thought, must be sought not in the individual but in the race. The individual, they held, has no true life or light except in the race; and the race has in like manner no true life or light except in God. The general reason of man is represented by them as the absolute rule of every particular reason, and the reason of God primitively revealed as the absolute rule and only true foundation of general reason. The reason of the individual when it seeks to guide itself wanders in darkness; and only by renouncing itself, only by the self-denial which constitutes faith in tradition, or common or catholic consent, does it unite itself to its kindred and its Creator, and come under the enlightenment of the true light which shineth in darkness and lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

It was as a supposed philosophical basis for this doctrine that the theory of the origin and nature of language elaborated by De Bonald appeared to the theocratists as one of the most important of scientific achievements. According to this theory,

[1] All the arguments used by Broussais in his treatise 'De l'Irritation et de la Folie' (1828), and by Comte against the psychological method, the inductive study of consciousness, had been previously employed by De Bonald, De Lamennais, and D'Eckstein.

man was the passive recipient of language, and with language of thought: language being not the product but the condition of thought. Language, holds De Bonald, contains all thought, and man can have nothing in his thought which is not revealed to him by his speech, the relation of thought and language being like that of light and the organ of vision, so that man can no more think without words, or otherwise than words will allow him, than he can see without light or anything else than light discloses to him. Language, which is thus not merely the instrument but the very life and substance of intelligence, he further maintains, is of miraculous origin, or the immediate, as contradistinguished from the mediate, gift of God. In proof it is argued that it cannot have been invented by man's reason, for man has no reason until he has language; that Scripture represents it as the direct gift of God to the first parents of the human race; that the truth of the Scripture representation is confirmed by philological research, which establishes the original unity and essential identity of all language; and that an examination of its nature clearly shows it to be far too complex and elaborate, far too perfect and difficult, to be the work of man. This hypothesis of De Bonald implies the truth of the fundamental error of Condillac—namely, that human nature is mere sense and purely passive; it proceeds on a view of the relation of language to thought, and of revelation to reason, which is not only unproved but inherently absurd; and it is defended by arguments which are either unsound or irrelevant; but it was very natural that it should be readily accepted by the theocratists. Its explanation of the origin of speech was equally an explanation of the origin of reason and of society, and consequently of all that reason has produced and society has experienced. It referred all these origins to revelation, and made tradition or the transmission of revelation the substance or life of history, the law and limit of rational and voluntary activity. It led directly to the result which the theocratists were above all anxious to demonstrate—viz., that man is dependent for his intelligence, its operations so far as legitimate, and its conclusions, religious, moral, political, and social, so far as true, on tradition flowing from a primitive revelation.

They were, of course, hostile to the hypothesis that man had gradually raised himself from a state of ignorance and barbarism to one of science and civilisation. They treated this even then prevalent opinion as merely a popular delusion, *le rêve favori*. The primitive age was, according to them, truly the golden age; and the first men were superior to their descendants both in intellect and in virtue. In the pagan religions and philosophies they saw only more or less corrupt forms of the most ancient religion and science; and whatever truths they contained they believed to have descended from the revelation communicated to the earliest parents of mankind. They regarded the savage state as in all its phases and degrees the result of a process of degradation and of departure from divine truth which had its origin in Adam's sin. They considered the doctrine of the Fall as going far to explain history. They rejected the doctrine of progress as a presumptuous falsehood which history contradicted.

They were equally averse to the theory of Rousseau that society originated in a contract, in the combination and compromise of a number of individual wills. They attached but little value to the individual. They regarded man, apart from society, as merely a potentiality or an abstraction. Man, according to their view, becomes a real person, an actual man, only through participation in the life of society. Not individuals, but the family, the State, and the Church are the true social units. Lamennais' whole doctrine of truth, certitude, and authority implies the vanity of mere individual reason and will. "It is not individuals," says De Bonald, "which constitute society, but society which constitutes individuals, since individuals exist only in and for society." De Maistre will not recognise individuals, "men," at all; they seem to him only abstractions. Hence he pronounces the proclamation of "the rights of man" one of the most foolish acts of the Revolution. "There is," he writes, "no man in the world. I have seen Frenchmen, Italians, Russians; but as for man, I declare that I have never met him in my life."

The theocratists further held that society ought not to be regarded as a mechanism, but as an organism. They charged the revolutionists with having done just the opposite—with

having supposed that laws could be instituted, constitutions made, and societies created, by the mere will and wisdom of men. According to their own view, on the contrary, God alone institutes laws; constitutions are not made, but grow; and societies are natural organisms which the skill of man is powerless to produce. An implicit belief to this effect may be safely ascribed to the whole theocratic party. De Bonald's theory of society is a delineation of society as an organic system. De Maistre, however, must be credited with having alone presented the view with appropriate explicitness and clearness. Man, he tells us, although capable of modifying all that lies within the sphere of his activity, can create nothing either in the physical or moral world. He can, for example, plant, tend, and train a tree; but he never fancies that he can make a tree. He has no more reason for imagining that he can make a constitution. To assign to any assembly of men the task of making a constitution is a more insane procedure than any which takes place in lunatic asylums. A constitution is the whole of the organic conditions necessary to the life of a people, and, therefore, not a thing which can be produced at will or made to order, like a loom or an engine or an article of furniture. It is a natural thing, and therefore no art of man can make it: art can only produce artificial things; nature alone can do natural things. It is a living thing, and nothing which lives is the result of human deliberation or human decree. The rights of peoples are never written. No nation which has not liberty can give itself liberty. Nothing great is great to begin with. All normal social movement is continuous and unconscious. All healthy social institutions are the products of time and history.

Such is the substance of De Maistre's teaching in the sixth chapter of his 'Considérations sur la France.' It will be observed that it is identical with the doctrine of what is known as the Historical School. De Maistre was the most notable French precursor of Savigny, the founder of that school. And so far as general principles were concerned, Savigny did not add to what De Maistre laid down. Yet the latter differed from the former in two respects. In the first place, he was more one-sided and extreme. He went nearer to assertion of the uselessness of reflection and discussion in political life;

nearer to the elimination of reason from among the means of social progress, and to the representation of history as a merely instructive process. In the second place, whereas the general political theory of Savigny was in accordance with the doctrine of historical continuity, that of De Maistre was in glaring contradiction to it. The revolutionists had endeavoured to throw off and abolish the medieval tradition of authority in order to realise the modern tradition of liberty which had been growing up since the fifteenth century; and De Maistre and those whom he represented were bent on obliterating this later tradition, and on expelling and destroying the spirit of the centuries which had nourished and strengthened it. But manifestly this too was an attempt to break the continuity of history. It was an attempt to tear out of history the centuries nearest to his own time. History never shows us individuals or nations going back to the ages which they have outgrown.

The writers with whose views on history we are now occupied detested what they called liberalism or indifferentism; and in assailing it they attacked all the primary rights and essential liberties of man. They represented the claim to exercise private judgment as impiety towards God and rebellion against the authorities that He had ordained; religious toleration as the persecution of true religion; the concession of freedom of speech and freedom of the press as the approval of all their possible abuses; and the granting of electoral or self-governing powers to the people as a violation of the divine order of society sure to produce anarchy and ruin. They fought against liberty in every form. They combated especially the independence of reason. Faith, not reason, and submission, not freedom, seemed to them the true conditions of social existence.

They defended the cause of absolute authority alike in Church and State. As to the former, Liberal Catholicism, Protestantism, deism, atheism, were all condemned as but so many stages of deviation and descent from the true religion, the sure and eternal basis of social order. Gallicanism was keenly attacked; its weaknesses and inconsistencies were unsparingly exposed. The right of the State to limit the sphere or control the action of the Church was strongly de-

nied. The right of the Church to freedom was strongly affirmed; but what was meant by it was a right to despotic licence, the right of the hierarchy to usurp the rights of the other members of the Church, and even to lord it over all mankind in matters of education, morality, and religion. De Bonald, De Maistre, and Lamennais were at one in claiming for the Church this sort of freedom, in ascribing to it this sort of authority. They differed somewhat as to where the freedom and authority resided. De Bonald was not strictly ultramontanist. He placed infallibility and sovereignty, not in the Pope, but in the Church as a whole. He held that a general council was superior to the Pope. But he was decidedly anti-Gallican and absolutist, maintaining the unlimited authority of the Church, as represented by a general council, even in the political sphere. De Maistre maintained the Pope to be infallible and superior to a general council, yet unable to dispense with the bishops, his necessary organs, not instruments that he may use or not as he pleases. In his famous work, 'Du Pape,' he argued that infallibility was necessarily implied in sovereignty, and that the sovereignty of the Pope had its divine warrant in the manner of its acquisition, in the history of the growth and services of the papacy. Hence the work is largely an account of the development of the papal power. As such, we can not only admire its cleverness, but may readily grant it to be much truer than any professedly historical survey which traces the growth of the papacy mainly to deceit and corruption. History, however, can only justify historical right, and historical right falls infinitely short of absolute right. Whatever history gives it may also take away. Lamennais was far the most influential advocate of the ultramontane creed in its entirety. He taught with a success which he himself soon came to deplore, but the effects of which he was unable to undo: that without the Pope there can be no Church, without the Church no Christianity, without Christianity no true religion, and without true religion no proper social order; and that, therefore, the welfare not only of the Church but of society depended on the Pope as the organ of the divine law, of which kings are merely the ministers. He inculcated papal infallibility as not only a

religious dogma, and necessary to the safety and strength of the Church, but also as the central truth of political science and the guiding principle of history, the recognition of which can alone secure peace, stability, and prosperity to nations.

As to the State, it was argued that sovereignty in the secular sphere corresponds to infallibility in the religious sphere, and must, like it, be one and indivisible, and entitled to unquestioning submission. "The revolution of the sixteenth century," says De Maistre, "ascribed the sovereignty to the Church—*i.e.*, to the people. The eighteenth century carried the principle into politics. It is the same system, the same folly, under another name." The temporal power, it was admitted, ought to be subject, indeed, to the spiritual power, to which it is naturally inferior, because a more distant and a feebler emanation from the divine power; but it can only be limited from above, not from below—only by the Pope, not by its subjects. They have no right to judge it, and still less to resist it and to impose conditions on it. The constitutional Government of Britain was in this light specially offensive to the genuine representatives of the theocratic school. De Maistre contemptuously pronounced it "an insular peculiarity utterly unworthy of imitation;" and De Bonald calmly said that, "mainly owing to its defects, the English are by far the most backward among civilised peoples." De Bonald's own type of a good government was ancient Egypt, with its Pharaohs surrounded by priests, and seated on the summit of an organised system of rigidly defined castes. The adherents of the theocratic party in general adopted the social ideal of the medieval hierarchy, and glorified the personages and institutions that had come nearest realising it.

The theocratists sought support for their theorems in the Bible; but they had to misinterpret and misapply its statements in order to seem to find it. De Bonald's hypothesis of the revealed origin of speech and reason, science, art, and government, was an extravagant exaggeration of a few words of Scripture, which it was unreasonable to use at all in the discussion of a scientific problem. De Maistre professed to found on Scripture, but had no warrant for the profession when he represented all the evils which afflict society as only

punishments, and punishments of original sin. Nothing can be more intensely unchristian, as well as inhuman, than his glorification of the scaffold, his eulogy of the Inquisition, and his vindication of war as an eternal ordinance of God and a fundamental law of the world. Nothing can be more opposed both to the spirit and to the letter of the Gospel than to maintain, as he does, that "the earth is for ever crying for the blood of man and beast;" that it is "an immense altar, on which all that lives must be immolated without ceasing and without end until the consummation of ages, the extinction of evil, the death of death;" and that God has laid on man the charge of slaughtering his fellow-men, and has made wars and battles, the incessant effusion of human blood, a condition of divine acceptance and mercy. Yet he passes off these revolting falsehoods as truths derived from revelation. Lamennais, in his references to Scripture, generally shows himself a loose and capricious exegete.

The writers whose views regarding history we have been endeavouring to set forth were men of exceptional abilities and varied gifts; but they were also men of utterly unscientific minds. They were essentially dogmatists, rhetoricians, preachers, and pleaders, not men inclined by nature or qualified by training to seek truth in a proper and rational way. They were ignorant of what science and scientific method are, and also ignorant of their ignorance. M. de Bonald was the acknowledged philosopher of the theocratic school; but how little he knew of true science is decisively shown by the fact that he took for scientific laws, for principles explanatory of real things, these two most absurd propositions: that all things are included under one or other of the three terms of thought,—cause, mean, and effect,—and that what the cause is to the mean the mean is to the effect. In metaphysics, the trinitarian formula appears as God, mediator, and man; in religion, as the Church, priests, and laity; in the State, as king, ministers or nobles, and people; in the family, as father, mother, and child; and in the individual, as soul, sense, and body. All these special formulæ, M. de Bonald holds, correspond to one another in virtue of their common relation to the general formula; so that, for example, the king is

in the State and the father in the family what God is in the universe; and further, the terms of each formula are related to one another as the terms of every other, the cause being always to the mean as the mean to the effect. The result is obvious, and yet startling—a complete theory of the theocracy, of absolutism in Church, State, and family, capable of being expressed in algebra.

The ultramontanist theory of history need not be traced farther. The Revolution of 1830 showed so plainly that the French people would not tolerate political absolutism, that for a time those who had been advocating it in the name of religion deemed it prudent to be silent. A Liberal Catholicism arose, and strove to reconcile the Church and society by gaining the former over to the side of popular rights and liberties. But when this gradually came to be seen to be a hopeless task, and at the same time a revolutionary and socialistic spirit gained ground, ultramontanism reappeared. Immediately before the Revolution of 1848, and during the Second Empire, the most active propagandist of its principles was the violent, domineering, and unscrupulous publicist, M. Louis Veuillot, editor of 'L'Univers,' and its worthiest and most cultured advocate was M. Blanc de Saint-Bonnet, author of 'L'Unité Spirituelle,' 2d ed., 1845, 'La Restauration française,' 1851, 'De l'Affaiblissement de la Raison et de la Décadence en Europe,' 2d ed., 1854, 'L'Infaillibilité au point de vue métaphysique,' 1861, and other writings. The works of M. de Saint-Bonnet have many merits, and abound in good thoughts and wise counsels lucidly and vigorously expressed. But so far as historical theory is concerned they add little, if anything, to what had been said by De Bonald, De Maistre, and Lamennais. The historical generalisations which they contain show neither extensive nor accurate historical knowledge, and his judgments on particular historical events are generally wanting in impartiality and moderation.

The 'Bibliothèque nouvelle,' edited by M. Veuillot, was begun in 1850 with a work 'De la Philosophie de l'Histoire' by M. Roux-Lavergne. In this work the philosophy of history is explicitly identified with the theology of history, and, in fact, is practically treated as a branch of Catholic apologetics. In the

opinion of M. Veuillot, the philosophy of history had been invented in order to destroy Catholicism; M. Roux-Lavergne attempts to compose a philosophy of history which will be a verification of Catholic dogmas.

II.

In the party of reaction which rose into prominence at the Restoration, all who were absolutists in politics were not traditionalists or ultramontanists in religion. Count Ferrand (1758-1821), as a historical theorist, represented this type of opinion. While decidedly opposed to allowing the people any share in the government of their country, and a sternly hostile critic of the creed as to the rights of man proclaimed by the Revolution, he was also a severe judge of the papacy and of its policy. Two of his works must be mentioned, but need not be dwelt on. The 'Ésprit de l'Histoire,' 4 tom., 1802, is an attempt to give, in the form of letters to his son, a general view of the great epochs of history, and to trace especially what its author regards as the true substance and main movement of history: the progress of government and laws and their influence on manners and public happiness. Its central idea, perhaps, is that political law rests on moral law, and moral law on divine law. It is a book of little value. The epochs of history are not determined in it according to any principle; the generalisations in it are few and insignificant; and the reflections which it contains are commonplace and superficial. The 'Théorie des Révolutions,' 4 tom., is a considerably better work. It abounds in condemnation of Napoleon, and hence, although printed in 1811, was not published until 1817. It treats first of physical revolutions in relation to their political effects, and then of religious revolutions and their political effects; but five of the nine books of which it consists deal with political revolutions. Such revolutions are described as "moral maladies attached to empires as physical revolutions to the human species, and referable to causes which produce them in all times and places, although always with modifications according to times and places." Starting from this view of their nature, it is argued that there must be a

theory of revolutions, just as there is a theory of laws. This theory he endeavours to supply by a study of the species, causes, occasions, pretexts, motives, immediate effects, and enduring consequences of revolutions. The study is commendably comprehensive, but generally wants thoroughness. The most interesting portion of it is that which treats of the effects of revolutions (vii.) It is of a truthfulness altogether remarkable, and obviously drawn directly from the life. The rest of his work a study of history under the guidance of Aristotle, Bossuet, and Montesquieu might have enabled him to write; but this part of it could not have been composed had he not been an interested and observant witness of the tremendous revolution through which his country passed in the closing years of the eighteenth century. Many of the positions laid down by him regarding that revolution have since been elaborately maintained by M. Taine, very possibly without knowledge of the views of the earlier writer. Also specially worthy of being noted is the use which he makes (iv. 4) of Aristotle's distinction between absolute and proportional equality. He has forcibly shown that to affirm absolute equality as a political principle must destroy liberty and establish despotism. Count Ferrand was an uncompromising opponent of the spirit of the French Revolution. Its chief aim he believed to be an impious desire to destroy the religion of the State, and all religion. In his own opinion the union of religion and of the State has been felt in all times and countries to be a natural and sound principle, and is, in fact, altogether necessary to the preservation and welfare of communities. Religion is the true basis of civil society, of policy, and of legislation.

It must further be observed that all those who were theocratists and traditionalists in religion were not absolutists in politics. M. Ballanche (1776-1847) was an instance, and he too was among the historiosophists. He was a man of delicate and easily moved sensibility and lively imagination; of gentle and tolerant disposition; of meditative and mystical, not ratiocinative or dogmatic mind. He was fertile in peculiar and ingenious views, but very sparing of proofs, and very imperfectly aware of when they were needed. He was, perhaps, the only Frenchman who, prior to Michelet, had gained a real

insight into the ideas of Vico; and he was also among the first of French writers sympathetically to appreciate that regeneration of the German genius which showed itself in Goethe and Schiller, Winckelmann and Herder, Goerres and Schelling, and Creuzer. His literary career began in 1801, with a book on 'Sentiment considérée dans ses rapports avec la Littérature et les Arts.' His views on history are to be found chiefly in his 'Essai sur les institutions sociales dans leurs rapports avec les idées nouvelles,' 1818, and 'Palingénésie Sociale,' 1823-30. Two unversified poems which had once a certain celebrity, 'Antigone,' 1814, and the 'Vision d'Hebal,' 1831, may be regarded as so far complementary to them. Ballanche was in all respects a romanticist.[1]

The idea which pervades and unifies his historical views is that history is a progressive rehabilitation of humanity from the evils of the Fall, marked by successive *initiations*, palingeneses. Man gradually raises himself from the state into which he sank through his first sin, by a series of acts of self-sacrifice and devotedness which unloose, one by one, the burdens that press upon him, and remove the obstacles which nature and society oppose to his advancement. These acts of redemption and deliverance are in most instances performed by individuals, but the benefits of them devolve on communities in accordance with the law of revertibility on which De Maistre had so emphatically insisted.

As regards the history of the ancient world, he was, in the main, a disciple of Vico. Like Vico, he deemed the struggle of the patricians and plebeians to be the key to its explanation—the fact which determined the stages of historic movement prior to the establishment of Christianity. Like Vico also, he represented mythology as being a kind of history of the oldest societies, and saw in languages the most ancient archives of the human race.

As regards the Christian world, Vico could no longer serve him as a guide. According to M. Ballanche, Christianity is an

[1] There are essays on Ballanche by Sainte-Beuve, De Laprade, and J. J. Ampère. His general system of thought has been well expounded by M. Ferraz ('Traditionalisme et Ultramontanisme'), and by M. Eug. Blum ('Crit. Phil.' of 30th June 1887).

eminently plebeian religion. It is the law of emancipation and of grace for all; it secures to the whole human race the right to liberty and equality. Its spirit was misunderstood in the middle age, and it is vain to imagine that mankind can be satisfied by the restoration of medieval institutions. It is the perfect and final religion. It is the permanent and inexhaustible source of progress. Within it there is room for the utmost possible progress. "Fundamentally and in itself, indeed, religion is not, and cannot be, progressive. But in the measure that time moves on, the veils fall, the seals of the sacred book are broken, a new spirit bursts forth from under the letter of the old texts, and things appear under an altogether fresh light."

Ballanche supposed the material of all truth to be a sacred tradition, which, while ever substantially the same, was also ever varying. He fully accepted the doctrine that language was a revelation; that it had been directly and immediately taught by God to the first man; that the words of God were what originally communicated thoughts to man; but he insisted on the gradual alteration and development both of the contents and form of this revelation, both of language itself and the spiritual truths it conveyed; and even divided the whole movement of history into epochs corresponding to the chief phases through which language had passed. First, language was *merely spoken.* This was when man was in his naive and graceful childhood, when all the world around him appeared in the colours of poetry, when religion was an intuition and inspiration, when reflection had scarcely dawned and speculation and doubt were unknown, and when song was the common channel by which the divine word passed from heart to heart. In this stage the sacred deposit of spiritual truth transmitted in language was in imminent danger of being corrupted, owing to the vague and unfixed character of its medium or form or vehicle, and society had to be distributed into castes, with priests and poets specially set apart to preserve and diffuse it in purity and power. But beautiful and graceful as the childhood of the race is, it must, like that of the individual, be outgrown. In the course of time thought ceases to be mere intuition, poetry, and faith; it becomes reflective, regular, and less grace-

ful, but more powerful and mature; and can, consequently, no longer be left to be merely uttered by the voice, merely spoken, but must be fixed in a visible and more permanent form, must be *written as well as spoken.* In this second stage of tradition, which is also the second great epoch of history, the priest and poet no longer suffice, and the philosopher rises to interpret or question their message and share in their authority. At the same time authority is weakened by being divided, inquiry spreads, activity finds new channels, and knowledge grows from more to more. Writing even perfected to the utmost is at length found insufficient to contain and convey the wealth of experience and ideas which has been acquired, and a new art is sought and discovered to satisfy the new demands which have arisen. Thenceforth thought is *not only spoken and written, but also printed.* It has reached its majority and stands no longer in need of protection. It claims the completest freedom within the limits of reason and justice, and will, sooner or later, inevitably secure it. All castes and class privileges will disappear. All will know the truth, and the truth will make them free. Those who attempt to obstruct humanity on its march towards its goal—the realisation of rational freedom—must fail and be put to shame. Such is the general formula of historical development suggested by M. Ballanche. It implies that history is a progressive movement or growth, ever advancing and spreading into a broader liberty, always tending towards perfect freedom in every phase of life.

Ballanche recognises in history the combination of liberty and necessity; of the free agency of individuals and the determinating influence of the social medium. He insists at once on the importance of personal initiation and on the conditioning and constraining power of the collective movement; both on the ability of men to create and shape the future for themselves, and on the certainty that every future will necessarily correspond to the past and present from which it proceeds. Like Hegel and Cousin he ascribes a vast historical importance to great personalities — revealers and initiators, prophets and heroes; like them also he attributes their influence and significance not to what isolates and individualises them, but to what unites them with their fellows and renders

them the fitting instruments and organs of the spirit of their age and people.

He does not confine his views of the future of humanity to the present world, but represents the souls of men as passing after death through many lives in many worlds, gradually raising themselves by their own efforts into ever nobler lives in ever brighter worlds, until they reach at length the glory which is immutable, where progress must cease. This portion of his teaching—his doctrine of metempsychosis—took root in the minds of Pierre Leroux and Jean Reynaud, and reappeared in their writings.

III.

The Revolution of 1830 was a heavy blow to ecclesiastical as well as to political absolutism. In striking down the latter it terrified the former into silence. It compelled the admirers of theocratic despotism to understand that an open advocacy of their cause was in the then state of public opinion the worst method of serving it. Accordingly they retired into obscurity, kept quiet, and waited for an opportune season when they could reappear. The place from which they had withdrawn was occupied by the Liberal or Neo-Catholic party, which had been forming and growing for a considerable time previous to 1830, but which only became conspicuous and influential when its natural ally, constitutional monarchy, triumphed over absolute monarchy. It was a party generous in its aims, full of hope and courage, lavish in promises, and eager for action. Its chiefs were brilliantly gifted, thoroughly sincere, nobly self-denying, and inspired with the enthusiasm both of patriotism and of piety. Their followers, largely composed of the brightest and best of the youth of France, were every way worthy of such leaders as Lamennais, Lacordaire, and Ozanam, as Montalembert, De Falloux, and De Broglie.

What this party had in view was to help to bring back into the fold of the Church those who had withdrawn from it, to secure and set forth the harmony of Catholic doctrine and of modern science, and to reconcile the claims of the hierarchy with the rights of the laity and the liberties of nations. It

was certainly a grand and most desirable end; one which all who believed it attainable were clearly bound to strive to reach. And although to realise it was even then manifestly a most arduous task, it was not yet a wholly visionary and hopeless one. The disastrous pontificate of Pius IX., the Syllabus, the decreeing of the Infallibility of the Pope as a dogma, were still in the future. But it is easy to see why the work so earnestly attempted failed, and failed so utterly that intelligent men are never likely to undertake it again. The Church had for ages been departing from truth, justice, and liberty, and could only return to them by an act of self-humiliation hardly to be expected from any great world-power, and especially from one which claimed to have immunity from error. The interests of those who ruled it were directly opposed to restoring to the lower clergy and the laity the rights of which they had deprived them, and which they were able to retain by their absolute command of the administration and resources of the Church. The great majority of the Catholic laity were too ignorant and superstitious to take the side of enlightenment and independence. Many even of the educated and intelligent minority held aloof from the new movement, either because they doubted of the practicability of its aims, or because they feared lest the freedom which was sought for the Church would be employed by it to the injury of the State. And, further, the advocates of Liberal Catholicism were not themselves prepared to assert their principles in opposition to an express condemnation of them by the Pope. With the exception of Lamennais, they were all found at the critical moments afraid to incur for their convictions the risk of excommunication, the danger of losing their souls through separation from the Church. But the Pope and hierarchy must always prove too strong for those who are thus afraid of their condemnation.

While the Liberal Catholic movement utterly failed to attain the ends towards which it reached, it is not to be supposed that it was wholly in vain. It greatly stimulated intellectual activity and quickened spiritual life while it lasted; and good effects of it remain. The truths contended for by those who took part in it may, even where dormant and buried now, yet "awake to perish never."

One incidental result of it was the production of various historical works which have been widely read, and which have had considerable influence on public opinion. Viewed generally, these works are, as regards style, remarkably eloquent; as regards spirit, ardently in sympathy with what is noble and good; and want only critical thoroughness and impartiality to be excellent. With the exception of eloquence, there is little to commend in the 'Vie de Saint-Dominique,' 1840, of the famous Christian orator, Lacordaire. It conceals the ferocious fanaticism of the persecutor in order to glorify the piety of the ascetic. It is disappointing to find that so one-sided and unfair a book could be written by so eminent a man. The 'Vie de St Elisabeth' of Montalembert is a beautiful piece of literary composition, but scarcely to be regarded as a biography at all. Its author overlooked the proper sources of information, gave credence to legend, and allowed free scope to his feelings and imagination. Hence a very erroneous representation of the facts as to Elisabeth, and an ignoring of the baneful influence of the infamous Conrad of Marburg, papal inquisitor-general, upon her nature and happiness.[1] Montalembert's chief work, 'Histoire des Moines d'Occident,' 6 vols., is of high value. It is the fruit of lengthened and sympathetic study. Its subject is one of great interest and importance, and amply worthy of the eloquence and learning devoted to its treatment. It is avowedly apologetic in aim, "intended to vindicate the glory of one of the greatest institutions of Christianity;" but that it should be so is much better than if it had been hostile and depreciatory. The reader, however, who wishes to distinguish fact from legend in it must do so by the continuous exercise of his own critical faculty, as the author is very sparing in the exercise of his. Ozanam was richly endowed with the best qualities of a historian. Although an early death prevented his executing more than some parts of the great work which he had planned, these amply prove his right to be ranked among the best historical writers of his country. His 'Histoire de la Civilisation au 5e siècle,' 1889, and 'Études Germaniques,' 1847-49, are the products of rare mental and of accurate and extensive research. Although a desire to do apologetic

[1] For proof see Wegele's art., "Die heilige Elisabeth von Thüringen," in v. Sybel's 'Hist. Zt.,' Bd. v., 1861.

service to the Church is always apparent in them, it can also be seen to have been kept, on the whole, well under control. The brothers Charles and Henry de Riancey published in 1838 an 'Histoire du monde,' which gave a general delineation of human history as viewed from the Liberal Catholic standpoint.[1]

None of those who took an active part in the Liberal Catholic movement wrote on the philosophy of history any work which calls for notice. But the celebrated Abbé Gratry (1805-72) may perhaps be considered as belonging to the Liberal Catholic party in virtue of his enlightened and liberal opinions; and his 'La Morale et la loi de l'histoire,' 1868, 2e ed., 1871, ought not to be passed over in silence.[2] It is, indeed, more the production of a preacher than of a philosopher, more a work of practical edification than of science. It is nevertheless an able and valuable book by a very remarkable man. While unequal, often diffuse, abounding in repetitions, sometimes rash in assertion and exaggerated in expression, and bearing other traces of improvisation, and of an intensity and fervour of conviction not conducive to orderliness, thoroughness, or accuracy of exposition, it is also characterised by independence and considerable originality of thought, as well as by impressiveness and vigour of style. It presents in a most striking manner some truths of vital importance to historical philosophy, and contains many admirable pages.

Gratry prefaced the first edition of the work by the words: "The science of the laws of history, this *New Science* which Vico has named, but could not know, is the science the principles of which I endeavour to teach in this book." Hence it is, I suppose, that he has been called the "Christian Vico" and the "Vico of the nineteenth century." He had, however, little

[1] There are English biographies of Lacordaire, Ozanam, and Montalembert respectively by Dora Greenwell (1867), Kathleen O'Meara (1876), and Mrs Oliphant (1872), the first two of which are good, and the last in every respect admirable. The French biographical writings relating to the leaders of the Liberal Catholic movement are numerous. The most philosophical history, written by a representative of French Liberal Catholicism, is 'L'Église et l'Empire Romain au quatrième siècle' (6 vols., 3e ed., 1860), by M. Albert de Broglie. It is characterised by profound insight into the period studied, and chargeable neither with want of critical thoroughness nor of impartiality.

[2] On Gratry, see the art. "Gratry" in Franck's 'Dict. des Sci. Phil.,' and the essay of M. Caro on Gratry's religious philosophy in 'Philosophie et Philosophes.' In the latter work there is also a most interesting notice of Ozanam.

intellectual resemblance to Vico; and, notwithstanding his real ability, cannot justly be represented as nearly equal to the Italian historiosophist in genius. He had read Vico's 'Seconda Scienza Nuova,' and makes a long quotation from its fourth book, but there are no traces of his having studied it closely or sympathetically. The fact that he can charge Vico with having seen in history *only the political movement,* is sufficient to show that he did not really understand his system.

Gratry has himself delineated what he calls "the scientific framework" of his theory of history in words which I shall reproduce so far as abbreviation will allow.

"The new science, the science of history, is one greatly needed in the present age of restlessness, uncertainty, and suffering, for it is the science of hope. As such it rests on this solid basis,—the history of humanity has its laws, or, more correctly, its law, and that law is worthy of man and worthy of God. The idea of law and the idea of liberty do not in any way exclude each other. Law and fatality are not the same thing. The life of the human race is subject to a law, not less than the motions of the stars. But while the stars obey their law necessarily, man obeys his law freely. As inertia is the essential property of matter, liberty is the essential characteristic of man. Man, therefore, can do what matter cannot: he can accept or resist impulses, and alter the velocity and direction of his movements. He can struggle against the law of his life and the immense force which inspires and directs it. He can choose. He can triumph under the law, or break himself against the law. But the law reigns whether it breaks or glorifies the free being which it rules. All the movements of history are the inevitable effects of the force of man acting under his law, to follow it or violate it: movements of life or death, of progress or decadence, according to the way in which the force acts under the law. The law always reigns; no one violates it in itself. The free force breaks itself against the law, or triumphs under the law, but it is always in virtue of the law that it is either triumphant or broken. The law always reigns, even in the details and form of the breakage and failure, as attraction always reigns through all so-called perturbations: every detail of perturbation is a regular effect of the law." [1]

"What is the law of history? It is one which was thus formulated by Jesus: 'All things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them.' This formula is even shorter than that of the law of attraction, and like it involves a whole science. It is the law of history inasmuch as it is the law of the cause which produces all the facts of history. But as in astron-

[1] T. i. 4-6.

omy besides the law of attraction, the law of the cause, there are three secondary laws, inevitable consequences of the attraction acting under its law, which describe the form of its movements, so in history besides the fundamental law, the law of the force, there is a law of the phases of progress, and of the form of the movements. This latter law has likewise been formulated by Jesus, and is: 'If ye abide in my word, ye shall know the truth, and the truth will make you free.' Its three phases or moments are: *abiding in the law, knowing the truth, and becoming free;* and they are the effects of human force acting under the law. If man does not abide in the law, instead of advancing to the knowledge of the truth, and by this knowledge attaining freedom, he will go into darkness, and through darkness into slavery."[1]

"The significance of the law of the force and of the law of the form of history, however, can only be properly realised when it is recognised that man is born into three worlds in which they apply,—the physical or natural world, the human or social world, and the supreme or divine world. Hence the true division of his duties: duties towards nature,—towards man,—and towards God. He has to increase, multiply, and replenish the earth; to subdue and transform, improve, and enrich it, by his labour and science. He has to bring society, throughout the whole earth, into order and justice; to cause war, spoliation, and misery everywhere to cease. He has, further, to seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness; to draw by faith, piety, and religious science, from the bosom of the heavenly Father, the infinite source of life and energy, those divine forces which will solve the problems and overcome the obstacles with which the forces of nature and of humanity cannot successfully cope. These tasks, these duties, are incumbent on all generations of men, but they are unequally accomplished at different periods. Hence the three ages of history: 1. The struggle against nature; 2. The struggle for justice; and 3. The endeavour after the freedom and perfection of the religious life. These ages are inseparably connected and interdependent. For men find that in order to subdue the earth they must establish justice, and in order to establish justice must have recourse to God; and that then they must recommence their labour to subdue the earth and to establish justice. These are the three great historical circles of which Vico caught a glimpse, without being able to distinguish the special content of each. He correctly perceived that they always follow in the same order, and then recommence; but not that they also always rise, and always in each circle lessen labour and enlarge the range of vision, like those spiral paths which mount up from the plain to the tops of mountains."[2]

"This law of progress explains the history of the Christian world. In its first phase, the Church struggles during more than a thousand years against Roman paganism and German barbarism, practising the

[1] T. i. 6-10. [2] T. i. 11-18, 297-302; T. ii. 382-387, &c.

word of God and justice. Next, it enters into the phase of truth, which, at first, was entirely theological and scholastical, which afterwards illumined nature, and which, in our days, carries light into the social world. The third phase, that of liberty, has been badly inaugurated by the French Revolution, and dates only from the present day. Humanity hitherto passive now begins, with full knowledge and entire freedom, to take into its hands the management of the affairs of the world; it enters into its age of manhood." [1]

Such is the general outline of Gratry's historical philosophy. That philosophy was inspired by a firm faith in progress, but in a progress which is the work of freedom, a "facultative" progress. Gratry criticises and judges severely society as it actually exists; some of his chapters are on fire with a fierce indignation against the enslavement and spoliation of man by man, the unjust and homicidal conduct, which still prevail; and he sees and dreads the dangers of the near future; but his general view of the duty of the human race is characterised by a hopefulness which may very possibly be excessive. At least he has not proved that he has a right to suppose that the powers of mankind will be multiplied so many times an hundredfold that the earth will nourish milliards of persons; that the limits of life will be greatly extended; that the stars will be utilised in now unsuspected ways; and that the place of immortality will be perceived. The main source of such optimism as is to be met with in his view of the course which history has to run was obviously the intensity of his belief in providential wisdom and goodness. It was also, doubtless, in part derived from the teaching of the celebrated economist Bastiat, the ingenious and brilliant opponent of socialism and protectionism. For that teaching Gratry had great admiration, and its influence is very visible in the work under consideration.

The chief service rendered by our author to historical philosophy is the demonstration which he has given of the dependence of political and social progress on moral progress. He has shown with singular clearness and force that the great obstacle to progress is vice; that almost all the evils of society would be removed if men would only consent to refrain from lying, theft, murder, and the like; that a right moral state is

[1] T. i. ch. xiii.

indispensable to economic prosperity, and every other kind of human welfare; and that if nations die it is not inevitably, but because they are guilty of preferring death to life. It is especially on account of this merit that Gratry's work deserves to be kept in remembrance; and it is not to be denied to it, or depreciated, because, not content with representing morality as the condition of progress, he also maintained it to be its law. This latter position is an obvious error,—one too obvious to require refutation. Any truly ethical law must be essentially distinct from a merely or strictly historical law.

I shall only add that the worthy Abbé strangely says nothing about the Reformation; is refreshingly satisfactory and outspoken for a Frenchman in regard to Louis XIV.; passes a judgment on the Revolution remarkable for the courage, insight, and fairness which it displays; and attacks Buckle, Malthus, and J. S. Mill too violently.[1]

[1] It seems desirable to mention at this point the following works:—

1. Abbé Gabriel, 'La vie et la mort des nations,' 1837. Its chief thesis is that the science, art, and industry of the present day tend of themselves only to push society to the abyss, and that its salvation must come from the love or charity which Christ, the Church, and sacraments inspire or convey. It is the work of a pious mystic, and written not without eloquence, but is hazy and uninstructive.

2. Abbé Frère, 'Principes de la philosophie de l'histoire,' 1838. Worthless.

3. Baron A. Guiraud, 'Philosophie catholique de l'histoire,' 1839. The author acquired some fame as a poet, and was a member of the French Academy, but the book named is of a positively ludicrous character, dealing only with such subjects as the two principles of good and evil, creation, universal soul, state of man before sin, alimentation and multiplication of men before sin, and various unprofitable questions unfortunately suggested by the first chapter of Genesis to an over imaginative mind.

4. Abbé L. Leroy, 'Le règne de Dieu dans la grandeur, la mission et la chute des empires, ou Philosophie de l'histoire considérée au point de vue divin,' 1859. This book I have not seen. It is unfavourably noticed by Rougemont, t. ii. 482.

5. L. Lacroix, 'Dix ans d'enseignement historique à le Faculté des lettres de Nancy,' 1865. This is a collection of "opening discourses." Their subjects are respectively—the union of religion and science; the law of history; the generating principle of societies; Moses as historian and legislator; the Greeks and Persians—the Medic wars; Rome, the Empire, and the Church; Christianity and Islamism; and the dynastic revolutions of France. They are the productions of a cultured and scholarly mind, and present attractively a general view of the course of history as seen from the standpoint of Liberal Catholicism; but they fathom no depths and solve no difficulties.

6. Père Felix, 'Le Progrès par le Christianisme. Conférences de Notre-Dame de Paris, 1856-64.' These discourses are eloquent, but devoid of philosophical or historical value.

CHAPTER VII.

THE SOCIALISTIC SCHOOLS.

I.

I HAVE now to consider the historical theories of a class of thinkers who felt as deeply as those treated of in the preceding chapter that society was grievously diseased and disorganised, but who held very different views both as to the character and causes of the evil and as to what would be the appropriate remedy. Instead of being, like the theocratic absolutists, wholly hostile to the Revolution, they largely accepted its ideas and continued its spirit. Equality and fraternity, in particular, they regarded as the highest and most sacred truths, the latest and noblest births of time. And far from looking, as even the Catholic Liberals did, to the Church for inspiration and guidance, they believed that it had long ceased to be a life-giving and socially beneficent institution. All the powers of the past, they thought, had been proved incapable of regenerating society, of raising the masses, of extinguishing injustice and misery; and so a new way must be attempted—reorganisation from the very foundations, and not merely some reform of religion or philosophy, of this institution or of that, which would leave the world much the same as before. It was also essential, these thinkers believed, to carry out this attempt in a direct way. It seemed to them very unfortunate that religion in its various forms had either entirely despaired of society, and aimed only at the salvation of individuals, or had assumed that society could only be saved, regenerated, through the salvation, regeneration, of individuals. Even the latter view, they said, is just the reverse of the truth. We must seek to

regenerate individuals through the regeneration of society, by the establishment of new social arrangements and institutions; and as an essential condition we must persuade men to fix their eyes on a goal, not beyond the earth, but on it; and to regard religion, like everything else, as of value only in so far as it guides society to the great object of ameliorating the condition of the class the most numerous and poor. It was thus that Claude Henri de Saint-Simon and François Marie Charles Fourier, the founders of modern socialism, were led to their peculiar speculations. These speculations, of course, only concern us here so far as they have history for their subject.[1]

Saint-Simon was born in 1760. He belonged to a family which professed to be descended from Charlemagne, and claimed to be better entitled to the throne of France than the Bourbons. He had, however, no aristocratic prejudices, or family pride, and was even deficient in self-respect. Religion had a slight hold on him, and his morality was lax. But he was generous and benevolent, athirst for glory, and from youth to old age resolutely bent on doing great things for mankind. He wandered in many lands, witnessed extraordinary events in the New World and in the Old, made acquaintance with all conditions of men, and had experience of the most varied phases of life and of the extremes and vicissitudes of fortune. He acted, experimented, and endured much before he undertook to teach.

The literary career of Saint-Simon began in 1803, and from 1807 to 1825 was characterised by uninterrupted activity. From 1807 to 1814, general science was the chief subject on which his mind was occupied; from 1814 to 1824, political and social organisation; and a new religion, "le nouveau Christianisme," was its latest product. He died in 1825. Of his works those which have most interest for a student of

[1] On the general history of socialism in France the following are among the best works to consult: L. Reybaud, 'Études sur les réformateurs contemporains,' 4e ed., 1844; A. Sudre, 'Histoire du communisme,' 2e ed., 1887; B. Malon, 'Histoire du socialisme,' 5 vols. (the second volume); L. Stein, 'Der Socialismus und Communismus des heutigen Frankreich,' 2 Aufl., 1848; K. Grün, 'Die sociale Bewegung in Frankreich und Belgîen,' 1845; and W. L. Sargant, 'Social Innovators' 1858.

the development of historical philosophy are the 'Introduction aux Travaux Scientifiques du xixe siècle,' the 'Mémoire sur la Science de l'Homme,' and the 'Travail sur la Gravitation Universelle.' They all belong to what may be conveniently designated the scientific period of Saint-Simon's life, the first having been written and privately circulated in 1807-8, although not, properly speaking, published till 1832; and the two latter having been written and privately circulated in 1813 and 1814, although not, properly speaking, published till 1859. It is also necessary, however, to have an acquaintance with the more important of Saint-Simon's other writings, as well as with the celebrated 'Exposition de la Doctrine Saint-Simonienne,' published in 1832, and chiefly the work of M. Bazard.[1]

Saint-Simon had considerable power of historical insight and historical generalisation, and abounded in ingenious views on the course and tendencies of human development. He was a lavish sower of ideas. He was not, however, specially qualified to cultivate and reap them. He had a susceptible, original, and fertile mind, but not one whose habits of thought were scientific; and he seldom either adequately verified or developed what he had conceived. He was in this respect a contrast to M. Comte, whose distinctive merits lay much less in wealth and originality of conception than in persistent pursuit of scientific certainty, and power of elaborate co-ordination and construction. Almost all Comte's leading ideas on the philosophy of history may be found more or less plainly

[1] All the writings of Saint-Simon, although not very numerous, are only to be found in the 'Œuvres de Saint-Simon et d'Enfantin,' a publication begun in 1865, and now containing at least 40 volumes. His principal works are to be found in the two-volumed edition of Hubbard, 1857, and the three-volumed edition, published at Brussels in 1859. Booth's 'Saint-Simon and Saint-Simonism,' 1871, and Janet's 'Saint-Simon et le Saint-Simonisme,' 1878, are excellent studies. Probably the most instructive document on the history of the Saint-Simonian school, from the death of Saint-Simon to its disruption, is the "Mémoire sur le Saint-Simonisme," by the late M. H. Carnot, published in the Compte-Rendu de l'Acad. d. Sc. Mor. et Pol., 1887 (7e and 8e livraisons). See also the account in Louis Blanc's 'History of Ten Years,' B. III. ch. 3 (E. T.) Michelet has some interesting pages on Saint-Simon in his 'Histoire du xixe siècle.' The most thorough treatment of his views on history and historical progress will be found in four articles of M. Renouvier in the 'Critique Philosophique,' Année x.

expressed in works written and either published or privately circulated by Saint-Simon before his acquaintance with Comte, which began in 1818, and came to a violent close in 1824. The Saint-Simonian doctrine, as it came to be received in the Saint-Simonian school, went far beyond what Saint-Simon had explicitly taught, and much of it, perhaps, he would have refused to acknowledge.

It is much easier to exaggerate Saint-Simon's originality than to say precisely in what it consisted. It was not originality of the highest order. It did not imply extraordinary power of independent, self-productive thought, deep intellectual penetration, or the apprehension even of a single great entirely unknown truth. It sprang chiefly from openness of mind to novel ideas of all kinds, and readiness to perceive their bearing on social reorganisation, the absorbing interest of his life. He has himself very candidly stated how much he was indebted in forming his system not only to the writings of Vicq-d'Azir, Cabanis, Bichat, and Condorcet, but also to the friendly instructions of Dr Burdin, Dr Bougon, and M. Oelsner. But the loans acknowledged made up a very large portion of his whole intellectual capital. It is enough to refer here only to those of which we should have known nothing but for his own statement. He owed to Dr Burdin those views as to the nature of knowledge, the law of the development of thought, and the order of the evolution of the sciences, which Comte appropriated, and made the basis of the system of Positivism.[1] Dr Bougon removed his doubts as to the continuity of beings. M. Oelsner convinced him that the middle age was not a period of retrogression.

Saint-Simon had the merit of assigning to the science of history a clearly defined place in the general system of the sciences. The science of history forms, according to him, the second part of the science of man—that part which treats of the human species or race. The first part treats of man as an individual composed of body and mind, and so comprises a physiological and psychological section. The whole science of

[1] See 'Œuvres Choisis de C. H. de Saint-Simon,' 1859, t. ii. 20-35. The 'Mémoire sur la Science de l'homme,' in which the passage occurs, was first published in 1813.

man, however, is but a part of a more comprehensive science, physiology, which, as understood by Saint-Simon, includes biology, psychology, and the science of history. Mental action and historical evolution are both regarded by him as physiological functions; only the physiologist can hope to study either with success. M. Comte, I may here remark, partly followed and partly abandoned this view of Saint-Simon, merging psychology in physiology, and yet including historical evolution in the separate and final science of sociology. But surely consistency is on the side of the earlier thinker. If the progress of the individual mind be merely a biological function, how can the collective progress of any number of individual minds be an essentially different sort of function, the subject of a distinct and fundamental science?

Physiology understood as stated, is further regarded by Saint-Simon as the last of a series of sciences which have gradually and slowly passed one after another out of a conjectural and theological state into a positive and properly scientific state. The entire movement of thought in history is from the one to the other of these states. The mind passes through a succession of religious phases,—fetichism, polytheism, deism,—and steadily substitutes for them in one department of inquiry after another those positive and scientific conceptions, the sum of which Saint-Simon designates by the word *physicism.* This law of two states is as fundamental in the system of Saint-Simon as the more celebrated law of three states in that of Comte; and the latter law differs from the former only by the insertion between its terms of the metaphysical state. M. Littré was bound to have remembered this circumstance when denying M. Hubbard's statement that the law of three states was borrowed from Saint-Simon. He was correct when he said that the law of three states is not enunciated in any of Saint-Simon's writings; but as there is undoubtedly often enunciated and constantly implied a law of two states, both included in Comte's three, he was quite mistaken when he affirmed that as to the origination of Comte's historical conception Saint-Simon is *hors de cause.* So little is that the case, that Comte's own assertion of originality cannot be allowed for a moment to weigh against the opposing texts and facts.

Comte could not but have learned from Saint-Simon a law of two states substantially the same as that which has become so closely associated with his own name; one to which he only added a term which few even of his disciples seem to think on a parity with the other two, and which others of them appear not unwilling altogether to extrude. Comte may have been quite sincere in affirming the whole conception to have been his own; but the affirmation itself was certainly not true, and only showed how little either his memory or judgment could, after the rupture of 1822, be trusted as to his obligations to his former friend and master.

With the age of Bacon and Descartes, according to Saint-Simon, the day of positive science began to dawn out of the night of theological conjecture. And first astronomy, with the help of mathematics, next physics, and then chemistry, came under the beams of the light; the reason of this order being that the facts of astronomy are the simplest, and those of chemistry the most complicated. Physiology, more concrete and complex still than chemistry, is as yet partly conjectural and partly positive, although on the eve of becoming completely positive. When it has done so, philosophy itself will attain to positivity. "For the special sciences are the elements of general science; general science, that is to say, philosophy, could not but be conjectural so long as the special sciences were so; was necessarily partly conjectural and partly positive when one portion of the special sciences had become special while another was still conjectural, and will be quite positive when all the special sciences are positive, which will happen when physiology and psychology are based on observed and tested facts, as there is no phenomenon which is not astronomical, chemical, physiological, or psychological. We know, therefore, at what epoch the philosophy taught in the schools will become positive." It is only when the sciences have all become positive that society can be rationally organised; for religion, general politics, morality, and education, are only applications of principles which must be furnished by science. Such is Saint-Simon's view of philosophy or general science, and of the place occupied therein by the science of history. This view was derived from Dr Burdin, and is substantially the same, as I have said, with that of M.

Comte. As it is most explicitly stated in the 'Mémoire sur la Science de l'Homme,' written five years before the commencement of Comte's intercourse with Saint-Simon, there is no room for doubt that the former received it from the latter. It is quite in vain to say, as M. Littré does, that that work ought to be regarded as non-existent, seeing that although written in 1813 and sent to certain persons whose names are known, it was not published till 1859; for, first, the list to which M. Littré refers contains only the names of twenty-eight distinguished public men, leaving Saint-Simon, as sixty copies of his book were printed, thirty-two to dispose of among his personal friends and disciples at a time when these were very few; and further, the work is incontestable evidence that Saint-Simon possessed certain ideas in 1813, which it is simply impossible to believe he would not communicate to any person who was on such terms of intimacy with him as Comte was some years later.

It will be obvious from what has been said that Saint-Simon was aware of the closeness of the connection between the science of history and physical science. Indeed he conceived of it as far closer than he was warranted to do. He regarded the science of history as a physical science; in other words, refused to recognise the distinctions which exist between the physical and moral worlds, or at least that any of these distinctions necessitate essentially different explanations of physical and moral phenomena. He had consequently to attempt to bring physical law over into the moral world, and into history a province of the moral world. His attempt was a very curious one, and he himself came to acknowledge that it was unsuccessful. Fancying that the unity of the system of nature and the unity of science implied that there was one all-pervasive law from which every other law and fact in existence might be derived, he was led by obvious and superficial considerations to believe gravitation that law, and to maintain that it accounted for chemical and biological, and even mental and historical, phenomena; that gravitation was, in fact, *the law* of the universe, of the solar system, of the earth, of man, of society, or, generally, of the whole and all its parts; and that if other laws had the appearance of independence, it was only because they had not yet been reduced under or deduced from it.

The social atmosphere seems to have been full of ideas of this kind when he wrote. His rival Fourier was at the same time insisting with much greater emphasis that the central social law was what he called the law of passional attraction, which he believed to be a rigorous deduction from Newton's law; and M. Azais, with copious speech and too facile pen, was explaining everything in the material, mental, and social worlds by expansion. Of course, all these attempts at universal explanation must be regarded as utter failures. No explanation of the kind aimed at has yet been reached even for the physical world, and there seem to be no good reasons for supposing that any such explanation ever will be reached. Far less likely is it, however, that the mind will ever attain to a unity so absolute that it will account at once for all the phenomena of matter and of spirit, which have so little in common and so much in contrast. To establish that the law which regulates the motions of material masses is likewise that which reigns in the reason, conscience, affections, and will of man, and which determines their evolution in history, must be regarded as a task far surpassing in difficulty any achieved by Newton; and it may safely be said that neither Saint-Simon, nor Fourier, nor Azais has given us anything designed to that end which has even the semblance of long-sustained reasoning and profound truth. They had, indeed, no better reason for their transference of physical law into the spiritual world than the existence of those analogies between the physical and the spiritual the recognition of which is the source of metaphorical language. To talk of the gravitation or attraction, or expansion of the thoughts or feelings of the individual, or of the successive or coexistent states of society, is purely such language; and the whole argumentation of those who maintain spiritual fact and law to be reducible to material fact is a process in which they cheat their minds by understanding figurative speech literally.

Serious as Saint-Simon's error was, it is not, as M. Littré maintained, conclusive against his claims to be ranked among positivists. It has nothing to do with that claim, but is simply a case of false explanation of phenomena. It differs from Comte's own reduction of psychology under biology only in degree; it is a greater error, but the same sort of error. As

it does not proceed on the assumption that the mind can know anything beyond phenomena and their laws, it cannot be pronounced, on the mere ground of falsity, inconsistent with positive philosophy. It must be further remarked that Saint-Simon does not appear to have promulgated the idea in any of his works written subsequently to 1814, and that he stated to M. Olinde Rodrigues that he had found reason to abandon it.

In the judgment of Saint-Simon, Vicq-d'Azir, Cabanis, Bichat, and Condorcet were those among his immediate predecessors who had advanced most the science of man; and Condorcet he regarded as the person who had done most for that part of the science of man which is conversant with history. He took, in fact, precisely the same view of the speculations in Condorcet's 'Esquisse' and of the relation of his own speculations to them which we find subsequently taken and expressed by Comte in both of his great works; that is to say, while censuring the exaggerations, the prejudices, the manifold errors of omission and commission with which the book abounds, he accepted its leading principles, that man must be studied as a species no less than as an individual; that generations are so bound to generations that the species is progressive and perfectible; that human development is subject to law and passes through a series of phases; and that from the past the future may be so far foreseen, as true and fundamental, as requiring only development and a more careful application. He professed to do no more than to build on the foundation constituted by these principles.

The idea which Condorcet merely incidentally expresses, that "the progress of society is subject to the same general laws observable in the individual development of our faculties, being the result of that very development considered at once in a great number of individuals," seems to me the central principle of the Saint-Simonian philosophy of history. "General intelligence and individual intelligence are developed according to the same law. These two phenomena differ only as regards the size of the scales on which they have been constructed." This being his guiding thought, Saint-Simon naturally compares, as so many others have done, the periods of human life to the stadia of history. A fondness for building,

digging, using tools, seems to him distinctive of childhood in the individual, and of the Egyptians in the race; a love of music, painting, and poetry, of youth from puberty to twenty-five, and of the Greeks; military ambition, of most men from that age till they are forty-five, and of the Romans among nations; while at forty-five the active forces of the individual begin to diminish, but his intellectual forces, imagination excepted, to increase, or at least to be better employed—and to this age corresponds the era of humanity inaugurated by the Saracens, to whom we are indebted for algebra, chemistry, physiology, &c. The race is now about the middle of its allotted course, or at that epoch when the human mind is in fullest possession both of imagination and reason. Our predecessors had, relatively to reason, too much imagination, and our descendants will have too little. A year of individual life probably answers to about two centuries in that of the species. It was thus that our author worked out a parallelism which is too fanciful to require criticism. But his principle led him to other thoughts which, whether true or not, are at least suggestive.

One of these is the doctrine of an ever-recurring alternation of organic and critical periods in history. It is constantly implied, and often partially stated by Saint-Simon; but its clearest expression is due to Bazard, who in this as in several other instances, has expounded his master's thought better than he succeeded in doing himself. The doctrine is to this effect. The human spirit manifests its rational activity in analysis and synthesis, in ascending from particulars to generals, and in descending from generals to particulars. These are the two directions either of which it may, and one of which it must, take when it reasons; an upward and downward, an *a posteriori* and *a priori* direction. The general process inclusive of both, Saint-Simon proposed should be designated by the rather extraordinary name of *the Descartes.* The twofold procedure of reason is not confined to the individual mind, but regulates the development of the race as a whole. Societies, like individuals, employ sometimes analysis and sometimes synthesis; and this determines whether the epoch which they pass through will be critical or organic. All history may be divided

into critical periods and organic periods. The critical periods are those in which the minds of men are employed in investigating the principles of the government under which they live, in endeavouring to amend old institutions and to invent new ones; in which no creed commands the assent of all, so that society is without principles, discontented, changeful, and, in a word, in a state of anarchy. Organic periods, on the contrary, are those which possess an accepted doctrine, in which society is cemented by the synthesis of a common faith, in which the actual institutions give satisfaction to the world, and men's minds are at rest. Thus pre-Socratic Greece was organic—post-Socratic Greece, critical. Roman history began to pass from organic to critical with Lucretius and Cicero. With the definite constitution of the Christian Church in the sixth century began the new organic period of feudalism; and in the sixteenth century the Reformers inaugurated another critical period which the philosophers have continued until the present time, when the great want of society is not more analysis, not the continuance of criticism, but a new synthesis, a new doctrine.

The correspondence between individual and social development suggested likewise to Saint-Simon a mode of giving increased extension and precision to the idea of progress or perfectibility which Condorcet had insisted on. It seemed to him that that idea had hitherto been barren, because there had been no vigorous attempt in presence of a vast variety of the facts of history to co-ordinate them into homogeneous series with the terms so connected as to manifest laws of increase or decrease. All the facts of history, such as equality, liberty, authority, war, industry, could be, he thought, thus ranged, so as to show regular growth or decadence in the past, and such as might therefore be anticipated in the future. Hence, besides the classification of the facts of history into critical and organic, he endeavours to exhibit three great subordinate or auxiliary series, answering to the three great phases of human nature. In that nature there are intelligence, sentiment, and physical activity. The products of intelligence are the sciences; of sentiment, religion and the fine arts; of physical activity, industry. Saint-Simon tries to form serial co-ordinations of these products in order to find the

laws of development of the principles which have originated them, and imagines that here too he discovers an alternative movement of analysis and synthesis, of the *a posteriori* and *a priori* method.

He makes another important use of the series when he attempts to arrange the various societies on the earth in a scale graduated according to their mental development. He points out that every degree of culture from the lowest barbarism to the highest civilisation is represented somewhere; and on this principle describes what he considers the different stages or terms. The lowest he illustrates by the state of the savage of Aveyron at the time of his capture; the second by the savages of Magellan Straits, without fire, without houses, or chiefs; the third by some tribes on the north-west coast of America, unable to count beyond three, and with the merest rudiments of a language and chieftainship; the fourth by the cannibal New Zealanders; the fifth by the inhabitants of the Friendly Society and Sandwich Islands; the sixth by the Peruvians and Mexicans as discovered by the Spaniards; the seventh by the Egyptians; after whom the series becomes chronological or strictly historical, its eighth term being the Greeks; its ninth, the Romans; its tenth, the Saracens; its eleventh, European society founded by Charlemagne; and the twelfth, that which is rising on its ruins.

A general glance at this scale or series, and still more a close study of the fifty pages devoted to its consideration, will disclose many defects. Some of them, however, were inevitable in the wretched condition in which ethnology was half a century ago; and had they been even more numerous, they would not have annulled the merits of the general conception and of the attempt to realise it; a conception on which well-known and very able works have since been based, and on which many other works, we may safely say, will be based; a conception which so links together ethnology and history as to allow of their giving full assistance to each other. The greatest error into which Saint-Simon fell in connection with it seems to me to have been his making it the expression of an hypothesis, instead of regarding it simply as a mode of arranging facts in such a way as might be hoped would eventually lead to the scientific

proof of a theory. He assumed that the lowest stage of culture was representative of the oldest; that man made his first appearance on earth as a speechless and disgusting brute, and gained his present height of attainment step by step. It may be so; but that assumption is one thing, and the series itself is another. And it cannot be regarded as otherwise than in the main a misfortune that the ruder races of mankind have been studied even by ethnologists with undue reference to the question, whether or not barbarous peoples can civilise themselves. Theological prepossessions of an opposite character have led some to affirm and others to deny that they can, with an emphasis and assurance out of all proportion to the evidence; and, in the case of most of those who claim to speak merely in the name of science, with a singular forgetfulness that *its* first duty must be to collect and analyse all that is to be learned regarding the ruder tribes of the world, and its next to endeavour without prejudice to ascertain what are the various stages of social elevation or degradation, and what the laws of transition from the one to the other; and that only through the accomplishment of these two duties can it hope successfully to solve the problem of the origin of civilisation.

Naturally it was the future of civilisation which interested Saint-Simon most. Naturally, also, his views as to the future were optimistic. The true "age of gold," he taught, was not in the past, where a blind tradition had placed it, but in the future. The reign of happiness was at hand. It would give full satisfaction to all the wants of that "flesh" which Christianity and the Church had so mischievously sought to repress and crucify. With the true organisation of society there would be a rehabilitation of the flesh and a fuller appreciation of material enjoyment. It is with a view to the requirements of industry and to the attainment of earthly happiness that the whole process of organising society is to be effectuated. Theocracy and feudalism, the ages of faith and of force, of the priest and the warrior, have irrevocably gone. The age of industrialism, of labour, of "the exploitation of the globe by association," has definitively come. Henceforth society must act on the axiom that "as industry does all things, all is to be done for industry." Industry must be *the* subject of administration, and those who govern

society ought to be those most competent to administer industry, to act as the officers of the vast army of labour in which every citizen should be assigned his place. His views as to the character and composition of the regulative and administrative body passed through various modifications, but in no form did they show any trace of a demagogic or revolutionary spirit, or even any aversion to absolutism or despotism provided it succeeded in realising desirable ends. He was evolutionist and anti-revolutionist; a believer in order and authority, but not in personal rights or liberties. These last seemed to him merely metaphysical abstractions.

He recognised the permanent need of religion as a social force. But he had no belief in it, or appreciation of it, as anything more; and, in fact, he meant by religion simply philanthropy. His 'Nouveau Christianisme' contains no theology, and but one doctrine — namely, that "all should labour for the material, moral, and intellectual development of the class the poorest and most numerous." Catholicism and Protestantism are represented as effete and injurious, because they forget practice in speculation, and insist on more than that men should regard themselves and labour to the utmost for their common happiness. Conduct, individual and social, philanthropically directed, is, according to Saint-Simon, the destined religion of the future, the result and goal of all the religions of the past. In setting forth this "religion" in the latest work which he wrote, he did not, as has often been alleged, break with his own past, and take up a different attitude towards religion. In the first of his writings he is found applying the word "religion" so as to give a sentimental sanction and colouring to his proposals for social reconstruction. In the last of them he employed it no otherwise. In commending religion he always used the term in a merely rhetorical or metaphorical manner, not in its proper signification. It was probably from inattention to this, that the 'Nouveau Christianisme' was not only supposed to contain what it did not, religious doctrine in the ordinary sense of the phrase, but that a suspicion was entertained that the Saint-Simonians had forged the work and published it in their master's name. Wronski told M. Rougemont in 1831 that such was the case; and the latter accepted

the account.[1] There can be no reasonable doubt, however, that M. Wronski had been misled. The direct testimony to Saint-Simon's authorship is clear and decisive; and there is nothing which really renders it suspicious in the contents of the work.

The opinions of Saint-Simon on particular events and institutions of history, on individual personages and various periods and nations, always show independence, and often insight. At the same time they are not infrequently vitiated by prejudice, and are perhaps rarely based on adequate research. These opinions, however, time and space forbid my examining.

Charles Fourier was born in 1772, twelve years after Saint-Simon. From early youth to the age of sixty he was engaged in commerce, although he had the greatest repugnance to this mode of life, owing to the dishonesty practised in it. His works are the 'Theorie des quatre mouvements,' published in 1808, the 'Association domestique agricole,' published in 1822, the 'Nouveau monde industriel et societaire,' published in 1829, and the 'Fausse industrie,' published in 1835. Of these works the first contains in outline or germ the author's whole system, the second is the most comprehensive and developed account of it, the third is its clearest and most sensible exposition, and the last is merely an application of it and comparatively to the others of little importance. Fourier died in 1837.[2]

Although his moral creed was in various respects objection-

[1] Rougemont, 'Deux Cités,' ii. 439.

[2] Numerous papers of Fourier were published posthumously in 'La Phalange.' Some of them were collected under the title of 'Manuscrits de Fourier.' A selection of them was translated by J. R. Morell, and edited, with notes, biography, and introduction, by Hugh Doherty. This is the work entitled 'The Passions of the Human Soul,' 1851. On Fourier and his system, the following works can be recommended: Dr C. Pellarin, 'Fourier—sa vie et sa théorie,' 1e ed. 1839, 5e ed. 1871; H. Renaud, 'Solidarité, vue synthetique sur la doctrine de Fourier,' several editions; Victor Considerant's 'Destinée sociale,' 1836-38; P. Janet, 'Socialisme au xixe siècle—Charles Fourier' ('Rev. d. Deux Mondes,' 1879); A. Brisbane, 'Social Destiny of Man,' 1840; and A. Bebel, 'Charles Fourier, sein Leben und seine Theorien,' 1888. The Fourierist philosophy of history was, perhaps, best developed by Fourier's earliest disciple, Just Muiron (Virtomnius), 'Transactions Sociales,' 2e ed. 1860. It has been expounded and criticised with thoroughness and impartiality by M. Renouvier ('Crit. Phil.,' Année xii.).

able, and even monstrous, his personal conduct was strictly honourable. He was disinterested and benevolent to a rare degree. He had a more original and a far more ingenious and powerful mind than Saint-Simon, to whom he was not in any way indebted for his ideas. Whereas Saint-Simon did little more than throw out general views and vague suggestions, Fourier elaborated a vast and complicated system, and dwelt with even ridiculous minuteness on details. Everywhere in the universe and throughout society he fancied that he saw definite mathematical relations and subtle analogies. His imagination was strong and exuberant but unchastened and unregulated. He was a keen critic and a formidable polemic. Shrewd observations and sensible practical suggestions abound in his writings amongst innumerable absurdities. He fully respected liberty, and made no appeal to authority either for the establishment or support of his system. Compulsion is not to be employed even in the nurseries of the new societary world. Attraction is to do all. He was logically more of an anarchist than a socialist, but can only properly be called a Fourierist. He hated the French Revolution; its oracles Voltaire and Rousseau; its leaders, and especially Robespierre and his abettors; and its methods. He had the utmost confidence in his own wisdom, and in the importance of his message to mankind. He started in the formation of his system with what he calls the *doute absolu*,—*i.e.*, the conviction that the social world as at present constituted is throughout a violation and reversal of the laws of nature and of God; and the *écart absolu*, —*i.e.*, the adoption of an entirely original procedure, unlike any which had hitherto been attempted. We may learn from his own words how he thought he had succeeded: "I have done what a thousand others might have done before me; but I have marched to the goal, alone, without acquired means, without beaten paths. Alone I have put to confusion twenty centuries of political imbecility; and it is to me alone that the present and future generations will owe the initiative of their immense happiness. Before me, humanity has lost several thousands of years in foolishly struggling against nature; I, the first have bowed before her in studying attraction, the organ of her decrees; she has deigned to smile on the only mortal who has

offered her incense; she has given up to him all her treasures. Possessor of the book of destinies, I come to dissipate political and moral darkness, and on the ruins of the uncertain sciences I raise the theory of universal harmony." Charles Grün and others have called Fourier "the Hegel of France." The title seems to me unjust to Hegel. Fourier would have deemed it the reverse of a compliment to himself, as he had a supreme contempt for all who, like Hegel, were professors of *les sciences incertaines*,—metaphysical, moral, or political. He resembled Swedenborg much more than Hegel. He had the same materialistic and figurate style of thinking; the same kind of faith in universal analogy; and the same sort of tendency to trace correspondences between the most heterogeneous things. The character of their systematisation and the cast of their imaginations were not unlike. And, I must candidly avow, they seem to me to have resembled each other in the want of full mental sanity. As in the case of Swedenborg, I can find no other explanation of much that he wrote than a strange and subtle sort of hallucination, an insane belief as to what was done in the world of spirits, coexisting with great general strength of mind and great religious discernment; so in that of Fourier, while admitting his ability and perspicacity in certain directions, I cannot but consider him to have been under the sway of a deranged imagination, and an insane belief in wonderful things soon to happen on the earth. This is surely not an unfair judgment to pass on a man who believed that the world was to be improved until the ocean should be lemonade, zebras as much used as horses, and herds of llamas as common as flocks of sheep; until men should live three or four hundred years, and there should be on the globe thirty-seven millions of poets equal to Homer, thirty-seven millions of philosophers equal to Newton, and thirty-seven millions of writers to Molière.

The historical speculations of Fourier are connected with his cosmogonical speculations, but not indissolubly. He himself admitted that the latter were neither proved nor capable of proof, and left his disciples free to accept or reject them. It is not wonderful that they should have generally elected to reject them, and, indeed, should have said very little regarding them. Fourier's cosmogony is, for the most part, indescrib-

ably absurd, proceeding on the supposition that the stars are animated, sentient, and voluntary beings, who procreate their own species and exercise their generative powers in the production of minerals, plants, and animals; and on other assumptions of a like nature. It is as fantastic as the wildest cosmogonical dream of the Hindu mind. At the same time, it is not wholly without coherence, suggestive views, and thoughts which future science may in some measure confirm.

The theology of Fourier is also connected, and very intimately connected, with his doctrine of human destiny and development and his system of social organisation. He was very hostile to atheism and materialism; a most severe judge of what he regarded as the irreligiousness of Owen and Saint-Simon; and not merely a theist, but, in his own opinion, a good, if not the only good, Catholic. It is obvious, however, that his theology was not the root of his sociology but a growth from it; not a primary but a secondary formation. It was what it was because his views of men and of society required that it should be so. He conformed his idea of God to the requirements of his social theory, and then argued that his social theory must be correct because it was implied in his idea of God.

The corner-stone of his whole system is a curious psychology, which, though essentially erroneous, is not unmixed with important truths. He claims to have found the fundamental law of society,—that which explains its past and enables us to foresee its future,—in the nature and workings of the passions, which he reduces to twelve primitive tendencies, the sources of all action, progress, and enjoyment. The first five are the sensitive, and have the senses for organs and stimulation to industry for function. The next four consist of love, friendship, ambition, and familism, which originate the smaller social groups and the virtues which find therein appropriate exercise. The final three are the butterflyish (*papillonne*), or craving for change, the spirit of party (*passion cabaliste*), and the enthusiasm caused by the simultaneous enjoyment of many sensuous and mental pleasures (*passion composite*); they have hitherto been only sources of suffering and vice, but were designed to combine and conciliate the sensuous springs of action with the

social affections, and will be of unspeakable service in the reign of harmony and in those *phalanstères* which are to regenerate the world. The satisfaction of all these tendencies or passions, the harmony of the whole inner and outer man with himself and the world, is *unitéisme* or religion; and the law according to which human nature moves onward to its realisation is their attraction when left free and unthwarted.

It is on this law, the law of passional attraction, a deduction from the Newtonian law, that, according to Fourier, the welfare of society entirely depends. The passions are not to be checked and resisted,—all the misery in the world has arisen from the false belief that this is necessary; they are to be harmonised and allowed full scope, and they will produce a social system as orderly and perfect as is the sidereal system. What has to be done is not to curb and crush the passions into conformity with the social medium, but to modify that medium till it offers no opposition to the freest and fullest development of the passions. Fourier claims to have devised a social mechanism, according to the diversity and intensity of individual attractions, which would completely secure this end and make every person ineffably happy.

The closest and most comprehensive connection is represented as existing between man and the earth on which he lives. About 80,000 years is the duration assigned to both, and the history of the one, it is held, will be found to correspond at every stage with that of the other. The earth is bad when man is bad,—contains noxious beasts and behaves itself ill, because he has perverted appetites and conducts himself irrationally,—and will ameliorate itself as he grows better. The simple change, for instance, of sea-water into lemonade, will purge the ocean by a sudden death of legions of useless and frightful marine monsters, images of our passions; and replace them with a crowd of new creations, amphibious servants for the use of fishermen and sailors; while a *boreal crown* will bring about marvels as great for the good of landsmen. The 80,000 years of human history, we are further told, divide themselves into thirty-two periods, naturally reducible to four great periods which correspond to the infancy, youth, manhood, and old age of the individual. The whole course being a natural movement from birth

to death is one of growth and decline; or, as Fourier says, of "ascending and descending vibrations of life, the two first being phases of ascent and the two last phases of descent. The ascent and the descent are equal in length—*i.e.*, about 40,000 years each." The notion that the collective movement of humanity is like the course of the individual through infancy, youth, manhood, and age, is applied, however, to the lesser periods of history as well as to its total development on earth. Each of these lesser periods is thus like Leibniz's monads—a sort of mirror of the whole. From what has just been said the reader will perceive that Fourier's general conception of the historical movement was not one merely of progress; it was one of retrogression as well, as every conception of the kind founded on the assumption of a strict analogy between the course of history and the life of individuals must in consistency be.

The first of the four periods of history, that of infancy, is as yet nowhere outgrown, although little more than 5000 years have been allotted to it. To represent the human race as having existed on earth so short a time as this implies, is, of course, not in accordance with the findings of modern science. Fourier is only concerned, however, to vindicate Providence for its having been so long, seeing that it has been almost entirely a period of subversion and discord, of delusion and misery. The first and the last periods of planetary life and of historical development, he argues, ought to be very short relatively to the intermediate periods. But the earth and the human species have had their first period abnormally prolonged by two misfortunes: "the scourge of the Deluge, by which the aromal system of our planet was vitiated and obstructed with deleterious germs, which horribly impoverished the post-diluvial creations;" and "the no less terrible scourge of the philosophic or twisted mind, the obstinacy in neglecting to study the divine laws and passional destinies in the analysis and synthesis of attraction." However, it is but short, we are assured, compared with those vast stretches of happiness which lie before humanity, and into which all the souls which have lived in "the state of limbo or subversion" will live many times under many forms. What Fourier teaches as to the childhood of humanity is the only portion of his historical theory which can be tested or verified.

All that he says of the other three ages is, of course, prophecy; and most of it is prophecy which is not in the least likely to be fulfilled. It is, therefore, with this first period that we here chiefly require to occupy ourselves.

It includes seven of the thirty-two lesser periods. The first is *Édénisme,* the primitive paradisiacal state in which men satisfied their simple wants without artificial production and almost without exertion, lived in peace, and enjoyed a "shadow of happiness." The human species, according to Fourier, was created in 34 or 36 races, of which only about a third composed the happy society, the remembrance of which has been transmitted to us through traditions that have been greatly vitiated. Geologists, archæologists, and philologists are severely censured for having instituted frivolous investigations as to Adam (the primitive collective man) and the Edenic state, while neglecting to seek to ascertain what is alone of importance, the cause of the primitive social happiness. Fourier informs us that it was "the serial system, or the development of the passions by series, graduated into ascending and descending groups, an order which a certain state of things rendered practicable in the first ages of the world, and which, having become impracticable afterwards, by a defect of the enlarged industrial system, might be re-established with splendour in the present day, when enlarged industry being fully developed, furnishes to the societary system immense resources that did not exist in the primitive or infantine ages of humanity." The happiness of Eden, however, did not endure long. The spontaneous productivity of nature ceased to be able to supply the wants of the population of Paradise as that population went on increasing. Inventiveness and exertion, science and instruments, became necessary, and were not forthcoming. Privation began to be felt; discord arose; selfishness and the consciousness of superior strength suggested to the men to make the women labour for them; the reign of tyranny, deceit, and injustice originated. Of this fall tradition has handed down an account, but an erroneous one, man having taken care to attribute the chief blame of it to woman. Its consequences have made themselves always increasingly felt in the four periods which followed,—those of *Sauvagerie, Patriarcat, Barbarie,* and *Civilisation.* These are all incoherent and un-

happy ages; times of ignorance and of a philosophy worse than ignorance, of feebleness and poverty, of coercion and injustice; stages of unnaturalness and untruths,—*échelons de fausseté.*

The character of the second period, that of savage hordes, is drawn with little exaggeration or passion, and certainly not in too dark colours. The common lot of the savage man is described by Fourier as, on the whole, happier than the common lot of the civilised man. He represents the mass of mankind in the savage state as in possession of a measure of freedom which comparatively few enjoy in civilisation; and as exercising without restraint the natural rights of which the vast majority of men have now come to be almost entirely deprived. They were free to take the fruits of the earth, to fish, to hunt, to feed animals on the land of the horde, to share in all that was involved in membership in the horde, to appropriate whatever lay outside its common property; and they were free from care. But while Fourier holds that the modern proletarian may justly envy the condition of the savage, and that the aversion of the latter to change his state was not altogether without reason, he also maintains that the freedom and the happiness of the savage were insecure and insufficient inasmuch as they did not rest on industry and passional attraction. Besides, such as they were they were only possessed by the males of the tribe, and frequently only by these while in the vigour of life. Women were excluded from all share in them; their lot was slavery and misery. And children and old men were generally harshly dealt with.

In the third period, that of the patriarchal clans, agriculture is supposed to have been practised to some extent; industry to have appeared in rudimentary forms; a certain differentiation of classes to have been developed in society; the natural rights of men to have been encroached on; and the condition of women to have been ameliorated. In the fourth period, that of barbarism, the head of the society wielded unlimited power; industry was pursued on a large scale; the arts sprang up; and violence and perfidy prevailed. Fourier, however, has neither clearly distinguished nor carefully characterised these two periods; indeed, he has been content to do little more than represent them as subversive and deplorable.

Civilisation, the fifth period of the infancy of the human race, is the stage at which the more advanced nations of the world have now arrived. It has, of course, an ascending and descending movement, and passes through four stages,—childhood, youth, manhood, and old age,—like humanity itself. In the first stage the governing authority is no longer as in barbarism absolute and undivided, but the kingly power is limited by combinations of great vassals, the feudal nobility. Slavery has also generally given place to serfdom. Monogamy is recognised as the foundation and law of the family, women attain civil rights, and wives become entitled to participate in the social advantages and consideration enjoyed by their husbands. The change in the condition of the female sex which distinguishes civilisation from barbarism gives a new tone and colouring to manners, and is highly favourable to the development of the arts and sciences, and especially of music and poetry. The ideals of chivalry are the illusions of this epoch.

Gradually, however, the feudalism which was the cradle of civilisation was outgrown. There was a development of industry and trade, of art and science, which lessened the power of the nobility while it increased that of the general population. Guilds became strong, townships independent, and even agricultural serfs comparatively free. The wealth and organisation of the burghers enabled them to resist and rival the nobles, and to wrest from kings the rights and privileges which they desired. The foundations of the representative system of government were laid. The illusions of freedom displaced those of chivalry as social ideals.

Civilisation at length reached the highest point it was to attain. Experimental and mechanical science succeeded in transforming industry, and endowing it with hitherto unknown resources. The art of navigation was greatly improved; geographical discoveries of vast importance were made; the distribution of goods was facilitated; and the world-market was opened up. The consequences are to be seen in the destruction of small industries by production on a large scale; in the disorganisation of agriculture by manufactures; in the rise of an industrial feudalism more oppressive than military feudalism ever was; in wealth becoming the chief object of desire, and

the chief source of power; in the general adulteration of goods, systematic and shameless financial swindling, and commercial dishonesty everywhere prevalent; in the rapid and constantly accelerating spread of pauperism and misery; and in a division of society into hostile classes which threatens to issue in a terrible proletarian revolution. The cherished illusions of this stage of civilisation are economic illusions, those dear to the egoistic mercantile spirit.

Whereas the predominant characteristic of the third phase of civilisation is mercantile anarchy or false competition, that of the fourth phase, or age of the senility or decrepitude, of civilisation, is a species of false regulation, resulting from a general monopoly of commerce and industry by an oligarchy of capital. A feudality based on wealth is fully developed, gains the command of all labour, regulates all the movements of trade, monopolises industrial and financial enterprise, controls governments, and by its system of loans draws to itself the revenues of nations. The mass of mankind thus find themselves in the last phase of civilisation destitute of all the natural rights which the savage enjoyed, including that of sharing in the consumption of what they have themselves produced. The earlier servitude of individuals has only been replaced by a collective servitude. While the two first ages of civilisation diminished and abolished personal and direct bondage, its two last ages produce an increase of general and indirect bondage, seeing that, as population grows and industry expands, the labouring classes become more and more dependent on a league of capitalists who have the wealth of society in their hands. The hopes of man in its closing phase are placed in association, but these hopes are illusions, for the association aimed at is the false association which merely combines capitals, and so only increases their power of absorption; it is a caricature of the true association which duly combines capital, labour, and talent.

The succession of the aforesaid states of society,—Edenism, Savagery, Patriarchalism, Barbarism, and Civilisation,—shows on the whole declension, or decrease of good and increase of evil. In the first only a shadow of happiness was enjoyed, and the other four have been subversive and anarchical ages, during which the earth has been the abode of fraud, oppression, false-

hood, and misery. Fourier treats with scorn the upholders of the theory of continuous progress; those who look upon such progress as the law of history, or on the actual course of human events as having been one either of necessity or of wisdom, either in accordance with nature or approved by Providence. He admits, however, that notwithstanding their essential incoherence and baseness, they provide, by developing industry, arts, and sciences, important elements and means for the true organisation of society.

His delineations of the periods referred to, and their subperiods, and especially of civilisation and its stages, are regarded by his disciples as "veritable masterpieces of observation and description." They are certainly instructive and vigorous; and they may be justly regarded as the direct or indirect source of nearly the whole historical philosophy on which contemporary socialism rests. It is, however, in his criticism of the characteristics and tendencies of the past ages of history, and especially of the existing constitution of society, that his intellectual power is most fully displayed. He censures and satirises what he calls the periods of subversion and misfortune, and above all modern industrialism, with extraordinary keenness and force. Rousseau had assailed society with eloquent vituperation, but his declamatory anathemas are not to be compared with the methodical and comprehensive, persistent and relentless attack of Fourier. No socialist has since surpassed our author in the vigour, closeness, and bitterness of his criticism of the organisation which he wished to overthrow. True, his picture of it is not a faithful likeness but a caricature. It is, however, a caricature drawn with amazing power; one which is at no point wholly without resemblance to the object delineated, while it so gives prominence to every weak, discordant, and repulsive feature thereof as most effectively to produce the impression desired.

With the close of the period of civilisation a process of improvement sets in. The next period, Guaranteeism, is the state of full transition between false and true organisation, "between limbo and harmony"; the stage of federation among nations, and of the insurance of individual interests through collective guarantees against risk and loss in all departments of social, domestic, and industrial economy. This sixth period

leads to a seventh, that of *séries ébauchées,* or dawn of happiness; the age of *Seriosophy,* the all-important science, hitherto so irrationally and disastrously neglected, of the organisation of society by attraction or pleasure according to natural groups and series. When proficiency in this science has been attained the earth will soon be covered with a federation of *phalanstères,* and the second great era of time, the adolescence of humanity, will begin.

At this point humanity "makes a leap (*fait un saut*) out of chaos into harmony." Harmony is to last about 70,000 years, and will include two great periods of about 35,000 years each: those of the youth and manhood of the race; the former consisting of nine lesser periods of gradually increasing happiness; and the latter of the same number of such periods of gradually decreasing happiness. The height or fulness of happiness is to last 8000 years.

Fourier has discoursed with even more fulness and minuteness on harmony than on limbo. It was his principal and favourite theme, and he has dwelt on it with inexhaustible ingenuity and enthusiasm. The commingling of sense and nonsense, of shrewd practical insight and of extravagant credulity, in his treatment of it, is phenomenal, and perhaps without parallel. It is no part of my task, however, to expound or examine his theory of social organisation. Yet I may relevantly express my disbelief that any world of harmony will ever be raised on such a view of the relationship of reason and passion as that which he has given. It seems to me a thoroughly false one. It led Fourier to form imaginations as to the relations of the sexes in harmony which have been justly condemned. It is true that he admits that these relations would be altogether wrong in civilisation, and that amorous liberty ought not to be exercised until harmony is firmly established; but moral blindness was shown in his fancying that any alteration of the social mechanism, or any effects of its alteration, could make immoral relations legitimate, vices virtues. Harmony will be a very short period indeed if on this point Fourier be accepted as its moral legislator. Most of his disciples, it is right to add, have rejected this part of his teaching. It is further only fair to himself to state that he

has often written very worthily of the rights of woman and of her place in history. For example, in his 'Theory of the Four Movements,' he has maintained and defended the following general thesis: "Social advances take place in proportion to the progress of women towards liberty; and decadences in the social order in proportion to the decrease of the liberty of women. . . . Other events affect political vicissitudes; but there is no cause which produces so rapidly social progress or social decline as change in the condition of women. The adoption of closed harems (*sérails fermes*) would of itself render us in a short time barbarous, and the mere opening of the harems would make the barbarians pass into civilisation. In fine, the extension of the privileges of women is the general principle of all social improvements."

When the close of the third great period, or twenty-fifth lesser period, is reached, humanity is to take a second leap; but this time, unfortunately, *out* of harmony into chaos. The epoch of its old age will begin. And it will go on declining through seven stages corresponding to those of infancy, but following in the reverse order, thus: (1) traces of happiness; (2) *garantisme;* (3) *civilisation;* (4) *barbarie;* (5) *patriarcat;* (6) *sauvagerie;* and (7) *séries confuses.* Fourier gives us no particulars as to any of these periods; his descriptive survey of the course of human history ends with harmonism.

Life at length ceases to manifest itself in this world, our race dies, and the earth bursts up, and scatters itself in fragments among the star-dust of the Milky Way. But this is far from making an end either of it or of us. It has a living soul, and that soul, carrying with it all the souls which compose it and have dwelt in it, goes into a comet which is to become a planet and to make part of the sidereal harmony. The soul of every planet has a multitude of successive lives; and the diminutive souls which reside within it often come and tabernacle in individual bodies born on the planet, although where souls outnumber bodies they may have often to wait a considerable time for resurrections. On our present globe every one of us is sure of enjoying about 400 consecutive and bodily existences in the course of a career estimated at 80,000 years. Out of these 400 existences seven-eighths (350) will be happy.

The material death of the soul will only transport its great soul and its partial souls to a planet of higher degree, where they will recommence careers of fuller life and richer happiness, although these careers will conform to the same law of birth, development, and death, of ascending and descending phases, as those of the past. Thus the souls of men, passing from existence to existence in the course of their resurrections on this globe, and then rising from star to star, from system to system, in the more fortunate path which they will traverse during eternity, always uniting themselves with matter, and clothing themselves in new bodies, will experience the immensity of happiness which God has in store for them.

Some of Fourier's critics, taking into account only his views regarding the subversive periods of history on our earth, have very erroneously represented him as a pessimist. We must judge of his historical theory as a whole; and considered as a whole it was highly optimistic. His faith in the future was not affected by his estimate of the present; it was an unbounded confidence that all men were destined to enjoy in countless existences every variety of pleasure to an extent of which they can as yet form no conception.

II.

The direction of thought inaugurated by Saint-Simon and Fourier was followed by various authors who applied themselves to the study of the laws of history. Three of them arrived at sufficiently distinctive results to have a claim on our attention. They were Philippe Joseph Benjamin Buchez, Pierre Leroux, and Auguste Comte. I shall in this chapter speak only of the first two.

M. Buchez was born in 1796. He was a physician by profession, a very ardent republican, and a copious writer on philosophy, religion, history, and politics. He was for some time a member of the Saint-Simonian society, but left it in consequence of aversion to the strange theological dogmas of its spiritual chief, M. Enfantin. He himself devised and advocated a sort of Socialist Catholicism, in which traditionalism,

mysticism, and rationalism, despotism and democracy, the sovereignty of the Pope and the sovereignty of the people, the teaching of Christ and of Robespierre, of De Bonald and of Saint-Simon, and many other heterogeneous and inconsistent things, were confusedly thrown together. He edited, along with M. Roux, the 'Parliamentary History of the Early Periods of the first French Revolution.' He began his philosophical career in 1833 with the publication of his 'Introduction à la Science de l'Histoire,' which was received by the public with considerable favour, and very warmly commended by the eminent jurist, M. Lerminier. A second edition appeared in 1842. In it M. Buchez felt at liberty to dispense with several discussions on general philosophical problems which he thought necessary in the first edition, having in the interval published a 'Traité de Philosophie' and an 'Introduction à l'étude des sciences médicales,' where they found more appropriate places. He added much more, however, than he retrenched, and so expanded into two volumes what had been originally one. He was raised by the Revolution of 1848 to the presidency of the National Constituent Assembly. The honour could not have been conferred on a more sincere republican or on a better-intentioned man; but he wanted the firmness, decision, and political capacity needed in a situation so difficult and in days so tempestuous. On the fall of the second French Republic he retired into private life. He died in 1866.

His general philosophy seems to me of very small value; and as it has been the subject of studies by Simon, Damiron, and Ferraz, I shall say nothing regarding it. On the other hand, his 'Introduction to the Science of History' contains, I think, a good deal which deserves to be clearly indicated.

The work commences with two prefatory chapters, the first describing the present condition of society, and the second explaining the general purpose of the treatise, the thought which gave rise to it and rules it. The picture of society is painted in the gloomiest colours. Distrust, selfishness, misery, are described as spread over all. Class is represented as at war with class; the rich as restless and insecure; the poor as envious and oppressed; women as frivolous, unfortunate, and

enslaved; religion, moral principle, worthy aspirations, sure and elevating hopes, as lamentably wanting. The sight of the evil suggests the question, Is there a remedy? The consideration of that question leads to inquiry into the nature of man and of society, and that to the search for a science of history. It is history which shows us the actions of humanity; and only through its actions can we know its nature, trace its past, or foresee its future fortunes. Hence it is the science of history which must discover the final causes of human societies, explain their revolutions, account for their miseries, and suggest the appropriate remedies.

The first book treats of the design and foundation of the science of history, and consists of seven chapters. In chap. i. M. Buchez seeks the definition of the science. Science, he argues, is a systematised whole of knowledge, an organised body of principles and consequences, co-ordinated in relation to an end or purpose. Science can only be defined according to its end. The definition of a science ought to include a statement of the purpose which it serves. Like Comte and others who had been taught in the school of Saint-Simon, he insists on the prevision of phenomena as the test of true science. He defines, accordingly, the science of history as a science which has for end the prevision of the social future of the human race in the exercise of its free agency. But is prevision possible where there is free will? or, in other words, is a science of history possible? This question M. Buchez discusses in chap. ii. under the impression that he is the first who has done so. Leaving its more thorough investigation to other parts of his work, he here treats of it, however, only in the most general way. He points out that history as a whole and in all its parts is not stationary; that it is a process in which beliefs, manners, actions, are constantly varying; that, in a word, it *moves;* further, that movement is of two kinds, fatalistic and free: and then, having endeavoured to establish that all human and social movements tend towards ends which are not arbitrary but determined by man's nature and rooted in the reason of things, he concludes that their course can be in some measure foreseen and calculated. This suffices, he thinks, to show that a science of history is possible.

In the next chapter we are told that the science of history rests on two ideas,—that of humanity and that of progress. The four following chapters treat of these two ideas. The former is but feebly dealt with. Humanity he explains as meaning the whole human species, the entire succession of generations and the entire host of peoples, regarded as one vast society, bound together by manifold ties of nature and responsibility; participant in one spiritual life, in a continuous education, and in an unbroken tradition; and predestined and organised for the realisation of one great aim. He employs two arguments to prove the truth of this conception. The first is, that "humanity is the function of the universe,"—a grandiose phrase, by which M. Buchez means, on the one hand, that humanity is not self-existent and self-dependent, but, as geology, physics, physiology, and other sciences show, closely related to the various orders of phenomena amidst which it exists, so that an essential alteration in any of them would render its existence impossible; and, on the other hand, that the whole universe is subordinate to man. His other argument is, that the activity of the individual is conditioned by that of the nation, and the activity of the nation by that of the race,—or, in a word, that the end of the race determines the place and character of all minor ends.

The idea of progress is treated with much greater ability and success. M. Buchez gives in a special chapter a better history of the idea than any one had given before him. Another chapter on the definition of the idea shows that Saint-Simon's best thoughts on the subject had largely fructified in his disciple's mind. The remarks which he makes under this head on the consequences which may be truly drawn from the idea, and on those which are falsely drawn from it, are generally both just and useful; while those on the resemblances and differences between mathematical and historical series, successions of quantities and successions of actions, are particularly valuable. Up to the time of Saint-Simon, progress in history had been merely stated and illustrated as a fact; with him and his followers it began to be analysed. The impulse to analysis came from natural science, and especially from physiological science, which became aware in the earlier part of the century

of the immense significance of the ideas or facts of development and organic evolution. In this connection it merits remark that M. Buchez is careful to show that human progress is a part of the law and order of the world; that progress is not merely an historical but also a universal fact.

The second book of his treatise is occupied with "The Methods of the Science of History." The following is a very brief summary of its contents. The aim of all scientific investigation is to discover the order of succession of phenomena, and to ascertain their relations of dependence, so that one phenomenal state being given, those which precede and those which will follow it may be known. Science is a power of prevision, and prevision has two degrees,—a lower, founded on the knowledge of the order of succession of phenomena—and a higher, founded on the knowledge of the law of their generation. Both imply the coexistence and presence of two conditions,—a *constant*, *i.e.*, an invariable, principle of order in the production of phenomena, and *variations* in the manifestation. There are both "constants" and "variations" in history. There are "constants," because the faculties of men have been neither increased nor diminished in number in the long series of generations. There are "variations," because these same faculties have increased in energy and range of action both as regards physical nature and social life. The "constants" originate in human spontaneity, and all the active elements subordinate thereto; the "variations" are the expression of all the difficulties of realisation, of all man's struggles against the inanimate world or against mankind itself. If we take the various social constants of history, make of each a subject of special study, and range under it according to the dates of occurrence all the variations which belong to it, the result will be so many linear classifications of facts, identical in essence, homological in character, chronological in order, and increasing or decreasing in some relation of proportion. These linear classifications or series give some knowledge of the course of succession among phenomena, and some power of prevision; but only a knowledge which is slight and imperfect, only a power of prevision of the feeblest and lowest kind. It is of the very nature of the process to over-

look the great facts that human nature is a whole, and that all its faculties, all the social constants, act simultaneously, act and react at every instant on each other. In order to bring events under a common heading, it has to separate them from all other kinds of events, however closely connected with them in reality. It does not enable us to determine the nature, number, or relative importance of the different social constants and the series dependent on them. It tells us nothing except that a certain order of facts tends to increase or tends to disappear. It needs to be supplemented, therefore, by another process or method,—one which will put us in possession of the law of the generation of phenomena. (I.-IV.)

This law must be sought among the laws of human activity,—the cause of every social change,—and these in its modes of manifestation or forms of production, not in its essence or in the abstract categories of reason. Social activity is simply the sum of individual activities, and cannot be essentially different in its laws and characteristics from the forces which compose or engender it. The law of the generation of social phenomena must therefore be involved in the analogy between the faculties of the individual and of humanity. This implies that that analogy contains both a law of constants and a law of variations. The first of all social constants is a common end of activity, a consciousness of a common work to do —not merely community of belief, language, or locality. It is that which makes a society, however numerous the individuals which compose it or the ages through which it passes, a single living and acting being. It is that also which gives rise to all other social constants, such as the wants of spiritual conservation, material conservation, individual conservation, good government, right, the discharge of duty, &c., with all the institutions which correspond to them. From it, the true principle of social synthesis, of social life, every other constant may be deduced, and only through such deduction can they be assigned their proper places. (V.-VI.)

The laws of variation are twofold—logical and tendential. The movement determined by logical law is the succession of states through which, an end of activity being given, history must necessarily pass in order that it may attain outward ex-

istence and embodiment. There is, according to M. Buchez, such a movement in the individual mind; since every action which has for end to manifest externally any idea or spiritual principle must necessarily pass in an invariable order through the three stages of desire, reasoning, and realisation. This logical law is universal. There is another which is more limited. Ideas involving a doctrine, plan, project, &c., in order to be realised must not only be desired, demonstrated, and executed, but must pass through two secondary states, which may be called the one theoretical and the other practical. These two movements frequently so intersect and combine that each period of the ternary movement may be decomposed into two periods, according to the binary movement, and each period of the binary movement into three periods, according to the ternary movement, and this many times. Now social activity is subject to the same conditions and laws as individual activity. It passes through states similarly related, similar in character and functions, and passes through them in the same order; although what lasts but an instant in the history of the individual often occupies an age in the life of the race. Thus—to take only the ternary movement—every great epoch of humanity, which, as we shall presently see, M. Buchez identifies with every *revelation,* has three periods or stages. There is first that of the revelation of the principle, that in which doctrines are imparted and accepted as immediate satisfactions to emotional wants,—the age of theology; next that of rationalism, of scholastic explanation and exposition; and finally, that of practical experience and application, of the close study and skilful utilising of all kinds of facts,—the period of Christian history, for example, which dates from Bacon and Descartes. The first corresponds to the stage of desire, the second to that of reasoning, and the third to that of execution in the movement of individual activity. It is unnecessary to describe the minute and complicated, yet regular and systematic, subdivision of these periods through binary and ternary decompositions. Let it suffice to say that these decompositions do not prevent the entire social development being reducible, as Saint-Simon taught, to organic or synthetical, and critical or analytical ages. (VII.)

The principles of the movement called tendential are spirit-

ual appetencies continuous in their action, indefinitely progressive, and always aspiring after an end. They have their foundation in the social constants, and constitute the variations which form the elements of the series; each social constant being capable of becoming the basis of a progressive series. The constants may be viewed as regards either organised corporations or individuals, and this leads to the classification of tendencies through their relation to duties and rights. But as, after reading several times what M. Buchez has written concerning these tendencies, I find myself unable to understand it, I can only report that he believes he has discovered and described a method which remedies the defects inherent in the mere analysis of history into separate chronological series of similar events considered as a means of attaining scientific certainty and prevision. His remarks on the conversion of the laws of the logical and tendential movements into methods of historical classification and prevision are, on the whole, both intelligible and just. (VIII.-IX.)

The third book is devoted to the consideration of four of the most important social constants, the common end of activity, art, science, and physical labour, but unfortunately in the way of mere general disquisition; so that it contains exceedingly little which properly belongs to a philosophy of history. The next two books are wholly occupied with matters still more extraneous and irrelevant; the fourth treating of the idea of progress as a means of forming encyclopædias of science and of education; and the fifth propounding a multitude of geological speculations, mostly worthless.

In the sixth book, M. Buchez reaches the sixth day of the Mosaic account of creation, and so plants his foot again on history, or, at least, on what he calls androgeny. But more than the half even of this book is occupied with discussions regarding the creation of man, original sin, the deluge, &c., of a kind little calculated to benefit historical science. In its fourth chapter, however, we come to what may perhaps be fairly considered the chief doctrine of his system. It is that divine intervention has been the great motive force in the development of humanity; that the principle of each distinct historical synthesis, of each complete logical epoch, the common aim of every entire civilisa-

tion, is only to be found in a *revelation.* History is represented as having four great stages, each initiated by a universal revelation given either through the inspiration of certain men by God, or the incarnation of God in man. The first revelation was made through Adam; and founded an epoch which had for end the conversion of its precepts enjoining the domestic duties, into habits and institutions. The second, given through Noah, founded an epoch which had for end the realisation of the more comprehensive class of duties involved in the relationships, both internal and external, of tribes and races. The third was imparted to some great prophet who lived where the sons of Japheth were in contact with those of Shem, so that its influence might extend to Egypt, India, China, Greece, and Rome, and was designed to communicate the sentiment of social unity and the idea of equality, along with that of the diversity of functions. And the last of all was the perfect revelation of truth and life in Christ, the source of a civilisation which has lasted eighteen centuries, and has still before it an indefinite future. The revelation given to Moses is not included in the series, because, although most important, it was not universal but particular—*i.e.*, designed for a single people.

The seventh book is a succession of pictures of the four great epochs of history, and of the lesser periods which they contain. These are but feebly and inaccurately drawn. Perhaps M. Buchez thought that the 'Essai d'Histoire Universelle' and 'Histoire des Transformations Religieuses et Morales des Peuples' of M. Boullard, and the 'Manuel d'Histoire Universelle' of Dr Ott, both friends and almost disciples, rendered it unnecessary for him to bestow much care on this part of his task.

We have now a general knowledge of what M. Buchez has done in connection with the science of history. What judgment are we to pass thereon? My findings are as follows: First, his treatise is prolix, wearisome, and in some places apparently almost devoid of meaning. Second, three out of its seven books are not occupied with the science of history at all; and, entirely irrespective of condensation, by the simple exclusion of what was irrelevant, it could have been easily and most advantageously reduced to less than half its actual size. Third, what is

most distinctive in M. Buchez's theory—the division of historical development into four great epochs originated by four universal revelations, of each epoch into three periods corresponding to desire, reasoning, and performance, and of each of these periods into a theoretical and practical age—is, although ingenious, so erroneous and fanciful, that a refutation of it will not be felt necessary by any intelligent reader. Fourth, the truly valuable part of the work of M. Buchez is that which treats of the aim, foundation, and methods of the science of history. It appears to be, on the whole, worthy of much commendation. As a contribution to the methodology of historical science or philosophy it has not received the attention and recognition which are its due.

Pierre Leroux was born at Paris in 1798. His parents were Breton peasants, and his sympathies with the peasant class were always keen and strong. He received the elements of a good education at Paris and Rennes; and he showed throughout life much more aptitude for learning than for practical affairs. After having been for some time a printer, he became a contributor to the 'Globe.' With the other members of its staff he helped to bring about the July Revolution of 1830. In that year he joined the Saint-Simonian school, and had influence enough to make the 'Globe' its organ. But the ideas of Enfantin on marriage and female messiahship forced him to secede before he had been two years in the society. He set himself, in consequence, the more earnestly to deepen and extend his knowledge; to examine the systems of philosophy which had acquired most reputation in the past or were enjoying it in the present; and to elaborate a social doctrine of his own. One result of these studies was the 'Réfutation de l'éclectisme,' 1839, a severe criticism of the principles of Cousin. It was received with great favour by all sections of the socialistic party, and was certainly not devoid of ability; but it lacked moderation and impartiality, insight into the nature of the system assailed and power of philosophical discrimination. Being far from just it was far from conclusive.

Leroux was a most industrious publicist, and, between the years 1834 and 1848, edited or co-edited the 'Revue Encyclo-

pédique,' the 'Encyclopédie Nouvelle,' the 'Revue Indépendante,' and the 'Revue Sociale.' He issued besides many books, of which it may suffice to name the following: 'De l'Égalité,' 1838; 'De l'Humanité,' 1840, 2e éd. 1845; 'Sept discours sur la situation actuelle de la société et de l'esprit humain,' 1841; 'De la doctrine de la perfectibilité et du progrès continu,' 1845; and 'Du Christianisme et de ses origines démocratiques,' 1848. Through these works he became the recognised founder of a form of socialism called Humanitarianism, which was much the fashion in Paris for some years, and which had one persuasive prophet at least, Madame Georges Sand.

The celebrity he had thus acquired, and the character of his political views, led to his being elected in 1848 a member of the National Constituent Assembly. There, however, he was sadly out of his place; and, it was affirmed, rather abused his position, by giving wearisome expositions of his system, and even reading chapters out of his own books, instead of speaking to the points under discussion. Hence one day a member gravely moved that no books should be read at the tribune; and on another, when the subject of debate was Algeria, General Lamoricière, rising immediately after the philosopher, remarked that M. Leroux had taken them all through the histories of Greece and Rome, but had forgotten the Arabs, and he hoped the Assembly would allow him to endeavour to supply the omission, as the Arabs were somewhat interested in questions connected with Algeria. Driven into exile in 1851, he lived for some years in Jersey, and afterwards at Lausanne, until the general amnesty of 1869 permitted him to return to France. He was a genial and benevolent man, who had amassed much knowledge, and whose brain was full of ideas as to the advancement of science, the renovation of religion, and the organisation of society; but he was a hazy and confused thinker, very apt not to prove what he maintained, and often laying himself open to ridicule by the absurdity of his hypotheses. He died at Paris in the sad and evil April of 1871.

The most important of his works is the 'De l'Humanité.' It contains all that is essential in his social and historical theory, but the 'Refutation of Eclecticism' may almost be considered as an introduction to it. He singled out eclecticism as an ex-

ample of systems based on the psychological analysis of the individual consciousness; a process which he held could only lead to delusion, the individual consciousness or Ego being a mere abstraction, devoid of real existence. The fundamental error and weakness of the dominant philosophy, he thought, was forgetfulness of the fact that the individual mind only exists as a part of a whole, and can only be studied in the whole of which it is a part. The life of each man, he insisted, does not belong to him absolutely, and is not in him simply, but is in him and without him, through an incessant communication with his fellows and the universe: the thoughts, feelings, principles, beliefs of each man do not spring up originally in the individual mind, but are received as a part of the universal truth of mankind. The history of humanity, he maintained, is the direct object of philosophy, the true basis of the science of life. He took up, in fact, much the same attitude towards the psychological method in philosophy as the writers of the theological school and M. Comte.

Now we may grant that he had some reason for doing so, the psychological method having been often explained and applied in a narrow, one-sided, and deceptive way. We may grant, and I believe must grant, that the analysis of the individual consciousness requires to be both confirmed and supplemented by objective observation of various kinds; that the consciousness of the race and not of the individual is the true subject of mental science in all its branches; and that if it attempt to proceed entirely from within, ignoring the combinations of human nature which are presented in history, literature, and language, and which ought to be employed as the materials of analysis and induction, it must inevitably fail. But it must be an even more fatal error of method to endeavour to discover the laws of human nature by any process which has not psychological analysis as its basis and animating principle. No immediate or direct apprehension of the facts in which these laws are manifested is possible by any form of outward observation, since what is presented to outward observation is always mere movements of matter, not facts of human nature at all. The signs and expressions of consciousness can only be recognised as such, and interpreted, through the subjective experience of conscious

states corresponding to those signified and expressed. In opposing one error of method, then, M. Leroux fell into another and greater error.

Passing from his method to his doctrine, it is to be observed, in the first place, that he rests his theory of human development on a definition of human nature. The only adequate definition of man, according to him, is, "an animal transformed by reason, and united to humanity." Man is not a mere animal —*i.e.*, a being endowed simply with sensation and sentiment, nor even an animal with reason, an animal *plus* reason; he is a unity of sensation, sentiment, and reason, and not a combination of them formed by mere addition. M. Leroux attaches the greatest importance to this proposition, and ascribes most of the failures of previous systems of political and historical philosophy to the denial or imperfect apprehension of it. Thus, he thinks, Plato saw in man only reason; Hobbes, only appetite; and Rousseau, only sentiment or will: and these three errors all naturally led to despotism as the ideal of social life; that of Plato to a theocracy, that of Hobbes to an absolute monarchy, and that of Rousseau to the unlimited subjection of the individual to the community. He (M. Leroux) believes himself to have been the first to apprehend what man is, at once in the unity and entirety of his nature, and so to have been the first to enter the path which leads to an adequate theory of historical development and social life.

Man is not only an animal transformed by reason, but "united to humanity." The end for which he is destined can only be known through a knowledge of the nature of humanity, and is, in fact, no other than the full development of entire humanity which constitutes progress, and in which the Eternal Essence and the Creative Principle of the universe reveals itself. M. Leroux is a firm believer in *continuous* progress. He discards the Saint-Simonian view of the alternation of organic and critical, constructive and destructive periods. He supposes that where intelligence may not be advancing the affections are growing, and that, in the course of generations, ideas are changed into faculties, which would remain although all the products of human reason were swept from the face of the earth by some great convulsion of nature; and that thus,

notwithstanding many appearances to the contrary, there is everywhere, and always, progress.[1] He records what Bacon, Descartes, Pascal, Fontenelle, Herder, and others have done for this idea, and claims to crown their labours by what he calls the axiom of solidarity. It is a rather curious axiom, has extraordinary consequences, and probably needs much more exposition than I can afford to give it.[2]

It means that entire humanity is one vast society, of which all nations, tribes, communities, and men, are, in their several places and degrees, parts, which cannot attempt to separate from the other parts, and to isolate themselves, without violating reason and producing evil; but it means more—viz., that men are fragments or portions of an infinite and eternal Being, the all-present, all-pervading world-soul, and identical in essence; so that in seeing one man we see all other men, so that in seeing Peter we see also Paul, so that Confucius and Newton lived in one another no less than in themselves. It means that the men of the present are the very men who were in the past, and who will be in the future;[3] that a child born brings with it into the world only a soul which has already lived; that each of us reappears, after death, on the earth in the form of a child. The solidarity of men, as taught by M. Leroux, thus involves the doctrine of the transmigration of souls, and represents humanity as a succession of generations, not of different individuals, but of the same individuals.[4]

[1] See 'De l'Humanité,' l. i. ch. iv., and especially the essay, "De la Loi de Continuité," &c., in the Rev. Encyc., 1833.

[2] It is explained at length in 'De l'Humanité,' l. iv. v.; while the whole of the second, and a considerable part of the first, volume of that work, is an attempt to prove that the ancients universally believed, more or less clearly, in the reappearance and revival of the individual in the race, of man in humanity.

[3] The title of ch. xii. l. 5e, 'De l'Humanité,' runs thus: "Nous sommes non seulement les fils et la posterité de ceux qui ont déjà vécu, mais au fond et réellement ces générations antérieures elles-mêmes."

[4] As an advocate of the doctrine of transmigration, M. Leroux was far surpassed by his friend M. Reynaud (1806-1863), the celebrated author of 'Terre et Ciel.' The hypothesis has perhaps never been presented in a more attractive form than in this work. M. Reynaud does not, like Leroux, assign to souls a succession of merely terrestrial lives. Wonderfully combining science and imagination, ingenuity and eloquence, he argues that the medieval conception of heaven, earth, and hell has been for ever discredited by the enlarged views of the universe which modern science has given us; that the true heaven is the heaven of astronomy, the heaven of stars of which earth is one, a heaven which

Humanity is immortal, and so is each individual of which it is composed; but humanity has no destiny except on the earth, and the individual no destiny except in humanity. The individual carries with him into each new stage of existence no remembrance of what he experienced in anterior states. The remembrance of such experience, M. Leroux thinks, would be no boon, but an intolerable burden. Those who wish it are as foolish as the miser who desires to carry his gold with him when he dies. Memory is but a superficial property; it belongs not to our essential life. The old Greeks knew its character better than we, when they represented those who went into the under world as drinking out of Lethe, the river of forgetfulness. The slumber and oblivion of death are as refreshing and strengthening as those of nightly rest.[1]

It is obvious that the axiom of solidarity, as explained by M. Leroux, must tend to magnify the importance of the idea of progress. It seemed to himself to raise that idea to the rank of a religious doctrine. And it certainly leaves no room for any other religious doctrines. It proves, if true, that no hopes or fears are warranted except those which are involved in the earthly destiny of collective humanity. All hopes and fears not thus warranted are now, according to the teaching of M. Leroux, unnecessary. Morality once needed the stimulus of everlasting reward, and the restraint of everlasting punishment, but faith in social progress is now sufficient. "There is no heaven or hell," cries our author: "the wicked will not be punished, nor the good rewarded; cease, mortals, to hope or fear. Humanity is

has no limit in space or time; and that in this heaven souls pass through an endless and ever-varying existence, the path of the just being ever upwards, from star to star, as they continually approach, without ever completely attaining to, the perfect life of the God-man Christ, while failure and sin involve the most manifold deflections from the straight course, with the sufferings and penalties which follow as their natural consequences. Into our planet spirits who have transgressed in some other come as into a place at once of probation and of expiation. All of them share in the guilt and punishment of the sin of Adam, because all of them have committed it in a distant age. M. Reynaud's book had an immense success in France, and deserved it. However erroneous or questionable its teaching may be, the genius which it displays is great and undeniable.

[1] M. Leroux devotes three chapters to repel the objection to his doctrine, drawn from the fact that men have no remembrance of their pre-existence; and to maintain that the want of such remembrance is more than supplied by latent or innate powers, and new conditions of existence.—L. v. c. xiii.-xv.

an immortal tree, the branches of which wither and fall, one after another, but in doing so nourish the root in unfading youth."

The course of progress is described as a continuous advance towards equality. It is apprehended chiefly, if not entirely, in its negative aspect, as a deliverance from class distinctions, an abolition of unjust privileges. It has had three great stages, corresponding to the three chief forms of caste. In the first, the task of humanity was its self-deliverance from the slavery of the family, the patriarchal caste of the oriental world; in the second, from the despotism of the state, as exemplified in the political caste of Greece and Rome; and in the third, from the tyranny of property, and all the medieval privileges associated therewith. It is at the close of this third epoch that we are standing now; and, with a view to the reorganisation of society in the future, it specially behoves us to remember that the family, the state, and property, are all in themselves good, and that only when they assume the form, and involve the distinctions of caste, are they evil. "Tout le mal du genre humain vient des castes. La famille est un bien, la famille caste est un mal; la patrie est un bien, la patrie caste est un mal; la propriété est un bien, la propriété caste est un mal." Future progress must lie in rejecting the evil but retaining and organising the good, alike in the family, the state, and property. Especially is organisation of the good needed in the period of history at which we have arrived. The equality of all men before the law has come to be recognised. The greatest of revolutions, the French Revolution of 1789, established it as a principle, and so inaugurated a new and better era of history. The new form of society, however, is not yet constituted, although its principle has been found. The generation in which we live is one without faith, law, or system. The old order is broken down, but the new has not been built up.[1]

[1] The theory of M. Leroux regarding the historical evolution of humanity and its stages will be found in the preface, and second and third books, of 'L'Humanité,' but more fully in the 'Essai sur l'Égalité.'

III.

Louis Blanc (1813-1882) is entitled to a prominent place in the history of socialism, inasmuch as he greatly advanced the socialistic cause by separating the problem of the organisation of labour from such dreamy and fantastic theories as those in which Fourier, Buchez, and Leroux indulged, by putting forward so definite and plausible a proposal as that of State-aided industrial co-operation, and by advocating it with remarkable literary and oratorical talent. He was not, however, a philosophical thinker; and his philosophy of history does not deserve more than the briefest statement. The following sentences taken from the first pages of the 'Histoire de la Révolution Française' present it to us in his own words:—

"History nowhere begins or ends. The facts which compose the contents of the movement of the world exhibit such confusion, and their relations with one another are so obscure, that neither the first cause nor the final issue of any event can be indicated with certainty. Their beginning and ending are in God—that is, in the unknown."[1]

"Three great principles have, one after another, ruled the world and history: Authority, Individualism, and Fraternity. . . . The principle of authority is that which rests the life of nations on beliefs blindly accepted, a superstitious regard for tradition, and inequality; and which employs constraint as its means of government. The principle of individualism is that which isolates man from society; constitutes him the sole judge of his surrounding and of himself; gives him a lofty opinion of his rights while not pointing out to him his duties; abandons him to his own resources; and proclaims *laisser-faire* as the sum and substance of government. The principle of fraternity is that which, considering those who belong to the great family of mankind members one of another, tends to organise societies, the work of man, after the model of the human body, the work of God; and bases government on persuasion, on the voluntary consent of hearts. Authority has been employed with astonishing *éclat* by Catholicism; it prevailed until Luther appeared. Individualism, inaugurated by Luther, developed with irresistible force; and, freed from the religious element, triumphed in France through the publicists of the Constituent Assembly. It rules the present; it is the soul of things. Fraternity, announced by the thinkers of the Mountain, disappeared at that time in a tempest, and appears to us even at present only in the ideals of the future; but all great hearts

[1] P. 1.

evoke it, and already it illumines the highest sphere of intellects. Of these three principles, the first engenders oppression by stifling personality; the second leads to oppression through anarchy; the third alone brings forth liberty through harmony."[1]

What M. Blanc here represents as the principles of authority and of individualism are merely abuses of the principles of order and of liberty: two principles which are necessary to each other, and which have always coexisted to some extent. Authority was resisted and restrained by individualism even in the middle age. Feudalism was a manifestation of independence as well as of obedience; and so, although in another form, was the Church. No institution in history has tended more than feudalism to isolate and individualise men of the ruling class; and none has been more effective than the Church in limiting the sphere of the State, and withdrawing a large portion of human life from its control. The honour of announcing fraternity ought certainly not to be assigned to men who so lavishly murdered their brethren as did Robespierre and the so-called *penseurs de la Montagne*. No one has ever proclaimed the principle of human brotherhood more clearly and fully than the founder of the Christian Church, and that Church has always both taught and practised it in some measure.

M. Blanc has endeavoured to trace the rise and growth of "individualism" in France: to show how it gradually acquired supremacy in the domains of religion, philosophy, politics, and industry; how it sapped the authority of the monarchy and nobility, and made the *bourgeoisie* the ruling power in the nation; and how, in conjunction with the spirit of fraternity, it produced the Revolution and destroyed the old order of society. His socialism, however, made him incapable of rightly appreciating liberty, and caused him often to condemn it as individualism, and to ascribe to it evils which were not its natural consequences, or which even arose from its absence or violation. What he states as facts, indeed, are almost always real facts and truly stated; but they are selected and often misinterpreted facts, insufficient to establish the general conclusions drawn from them. M. Blanc obviously comprehended

[1] Pp. 9, 10.

very imperfectly the teaching of Hus. He displays little of the insight into the genius and influence of the Reformation and of Calvinism so conspicuously manifested both by Ranke and Mignet. He indicates well the services of Richelieu, but overlooks the mischievous tendencies of his policy. He characterises the historical personages whom he deems the representatives of individualism chiefly by their defects; and those whom he regards as the prophets of fraternity almost entirely by their best qualities, or their mere professions, or the grand and generous intentions which he himself attributes to them. He vigorously denounces the Terror as at once wicked and foolish, yet, in part and by implication, justifies it in representing it as an inevitable fatality. For so representing it he certainly gives no solid reasons. Some of the guiltiest of the Terrorists he portrays as the prophets, heroes, and martyrs of the faith which is to save society and to rule the future.

The historical philosophy of M. Blanc is so feeble, so meagre, and so vague that I must not dwell on it further.

The socialistic theorists whose historical speculations have been under consideration in this chapter had no keener or more outspoken opponent than P. J. Proudhon (1804-69), who was commonly regarded as himself the most extreme and dangerous of socialists, although he was really much more of an extravagant individualist. He was very radical and revolutionary: his social ideal was *an-archy*,—absolute equality, the absence of government,—which he held was not to be confounded with *anarchy—i.e.*, chaos or disorder. Possessed of rare ability as a polemic, and reckless of restraints in regard to the manner of exercising it, he assailed and ridiculed with tremendous effect the doctrines of the Saint-Simonians and Fourierists, of Leroux and Louis Blanc. Unfortunately he was as indulgent a judge of his own ideas as he was a severe critic of those of other people. Besides, he changed his opinions very often; indulged most liberally in exaggerated statements and in self-contradiction; proclaimed that he had got possession of truths when he was merely hoping to find them; and never did attain the proved and definitive system which he sought for. He loved to startle the public by audacious propositions, *la propriété, c'est*

le vol; Dieu, c'est le mal, and the like,—regardless of the misconceptions which they would cause and of the needless offence which they would give. Yet he was not only a man of great talent but of many estimable qualities of character. In the most violent of his controversies he took no mean advantages and showed no malignity; although intensely in sympathy with the working classes, far from flattering them, like Lamartine, Ledru Rollin, Louis Blanc, and so many others, he never hesitated to tell them the most disagreeable truths in the plainest way; notwithstanding his avowed contempt for women in general he showed due respect for them individually, and was an excellent husband and the affectionate father of two daughters; and rigid honesty, abhorrence of licentiousness, helpfulness to the unfortunate, and absolute faith in justice, were among his most prominent traits. He had an original and resourceful intellect, a rich and good nature, and remarkable literary gifts, but was so deficient in self-restraint and patience, calmness and moderation, that the fruits of his mind and activity never ripened, but were forced to appear as crude and undeveloped thoughts, abortive schemes and efforts, or even outbursts of passion, vanity, and impiety, which did great injustice alike to his talents and to his deeper and better self.[1]

Proudhon has in several of his writings treated of history. His 'De la Création de l'Ordre dans l'Humanité (3d ed., 1849) has for its central and ruling conception an historical hypothesis. It is, however, one directly borrowed, although without explicit acknowledgment, from Comte. Proudhon expressed it thus: "Religion, philosophy, science; faith, sophistic, and method; such are the three moments of knowledge, the three epochs of the education of the human race."[2] He endeavoured to prove it by a somewhat lengthened examination of religion and philosophy, and concludes in the following terms:—

"Without religion humanity would have perished at its birth; without philosophy it would have remained in an eternal infancy: but the opinion that religion and philosophy have meant anything

[1] The character of Proudhon can be best studied in his 'Correspondance,' 14 vols., 1875. Besides the articles of Ferraz (*op. cit.*), Renouvier (Crit. phil.), and Franck (Dict.), see Sainte-Beuve's 'Proudhon, sa vie et sa correspondance,' 1872.

[2] P. 10.

more than a particular state of consciousness and intelligence has been the worst malady of the human mind. Religion and philosophy, conceived of, the first as a revelation of divine dogmas, the second as the science of causes, have filled the earth with fanatics and fools. . . . A little of philosophy has always mingled with religion; a breath of religion has always penetrated philosophy. Christianity was a philosophical religion, the most philosophical of religions: Confucius, Plato, the apostle Paul, Rousseau, Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, Chateaubriand, have been religious philosophers. Their writings are immortal: but of all the things which it most concerns us to know, and of which they have sometimes spoken with an eloquence so grand, they have known nothing, and have taught us nothing; and the combination of contrary qualities which we observe in them has been without profit to science. How great, then, is the illusion of those who now speak of uniting, as two realities, philosophy and religion? Theology has fallen, sophistic has been struck dead: there is no more religion, there is no philosophy."[1]

Having reached this result M. Proudhon forthwith proceeds to expound a philosophy of his own, akin to the philosophy of Comte, although directly drawn to a greater extent from the teaching of Kant, Fourier, and Ampère. It is a sort of theory or logic of science, and he calls it Metaphysics, not improbably just because of Comte's repudiation of the term. He next treats of what he designates Political Economy, but by which he means all science that bears on economical, political, and social organisation. The laws of Political Economy thus understood he holds to be the laws of history: and thus is led to set forth his views on history (pp. 340-404).

He defines it as "the succession of states through which the mind and society pass before the former attains pure science and the latter the realisation of its laws." He argues that it is properly speaking not science, but only matter of science; and that it is an evolution the laws of which are those that Political Economy ought to ascertain and expound. He throws out a considerable number of interesting remarks and plausible generalisations regarding the movement of history under the action of these laws, and the perturbations which follow from their violation; but he fails to combine them into any consistent whole. The general impression produced is confused and disappointing. He follows Saint-Simon and Fourier in

[1] P. 96.

attempting to elucidate history by the conception of the *series*, and, as he supposes, Hegel by applying to its evolution the formula of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis.

In the work just referred to, Proudhon has treated of the notion and fact of progress at considerable length, but with arbitrary ingenuity, uselessly quibbling over mere words and phrases, and arriving at no clear general result. He has, however, dealt with the subject in a far more able and satisfactory manner in his later and much more important work, 'De la Justice dans la Révolution et dans l'Église.' Here he has shown with great effectiveness the vagueness, superficiality, and exaggerations of the representations given of progress by ordinary theorists and eulogists; and has traced them to their source, a want of insight into what human progress really is. It does not follow that there must be such progress because population or wealth is increasing, or because the arts and sciences are advancing. While any or all of these things are happening, man himself may be deteriorating; he may be losing in independence, in virtue, in manhood. But the true progress of man implies the true progress of *men;* and, therefore, can only be their own work, and must be inclusive especially of what distinguishes them as men. Its chief criteria must be found not in what is external to or independent of man, but in what is most essentially his own and constitutive of himself,—liberty and justice. All development which is not due to man's own energy, and which does not tend towards justice in all the relations of life, must be merely an illusory semblance of progress. True historical progress, having for its condition freedom and for its end the establishment of justice, may be defined as "la justification de l'humanité par elle-même sous l'excitation de l'idéal." It is no organic evolution or inevitable necessity: decadence is possible, and has often occurred; it takes place whenever justice is only feebly and partially sought for, or when any other ideal is preferred to that of justice. For Proudhon, justice consists of equality, and whatever creates inequality is unjust. Hence, while a decided opponent of communism, he was also an enemy of property in land, of the exclusive possession by individuals of the instruments of labour, and of the remuneration of work according to any other scale than duration.

He clearly saw, however, what communists have almost always failed to see, that the pursuit of equality as the ideal of justice could not lead to wealth but to indigence: that, for example, were his ideal obtained, the annual income of France could not give more than three francs per day to each French family of four persons; and consequently, that the existing state of variety of fortunes in the nation would be replaced not by one of abundance for all, but by one of universal poverty. But this caused him neither fear nor regret. Always poor, always laborious, he never complained either of poverty or of labour. He held that labour requires poverty and that poverty is the condition of labour; that they are naturally conjoined, and that both are necessary to the moral development of man. He indulged in no excesses of sentimentalism over the toils and hardships of the poor; he was fierce in his denunciations of the frivolity, the luxury, and the immorality of the rich. Wealth, not poverty, was in his eyes the evil which had to be overcome; the evil which corrupts individuals and ruins communities.

Proudhon's intense conviction of the reality and supremacy of moral law was what gave its chief attraction and value to the historical theory expounded in his 'De la Justice.' A narrow and extreme view of its all-sufficiency and exclusive legitimacy was the source of its most pervading defect. He unnaturally opposed justice to piety, morality to religion. He contended that the decay of faith was the indispensable condition of the development both of reason and of virtue; and that all history teaches the necessity of getting rid of religion. His historical theory is thus, while profoundly moral, thoroughly anti-religious. The book in which he has most fully expounded it is a continuous assault on religion; representing it as a power which invariably perverts reason and conscience, and produces weakness and disorder in society.[1]

In his 'La Guerre et la Paix,' Proudhon committed himself to a defence of the right of force and of conquest which cannot

[1] Proudhon's teaching in favour of the separation of morality from religion and philosophy was adopted by a school or party which had for some years an organ in the weekly press of Paris, 'La Morale Indépendante,' 1865-69. Its chief contributors were Mme. Coignet and MM. Massol and Morin. For an examination of the fundamental theses maintained in it, see E. Caro, 'Problèmes de Morale Sociale,' ch. i.-iii.

be reconciled with faithful adherence to the principle of justice. The view which he has there given of war as a means of peace is one which history certainly does not confirm.

He was a strenuous opponent of the principle of nationality, which has attracted so much attention and exerted so much influence in the nineteenth century. He did not regret the destruction of Poland, and he regarded the restoration of Italy as a deplorable error. He believed the dissolution of all extant nationalities into small communities to be indispensable to the attainment of a truly free and just condition of society. The State he regarded as incompatible with liberty and equality, and as, like religion, a most formidable obstacle to progress. He believed that what was needed was its destruction, not its mere reformation; that social life could only be what it ought to be when the very idea of the State had been cast out of the mind as a pernicious idol, and when all that had been built on it—legislation and administration, kings, senates, tribunals, diplomacy, armies, &c.—had disappeared. He wished that there should be no social authority whatever; that there should be only free associations of workmen. It was because he held this doctrine that he called himself an *an-archist.* As he was the first to present it with clearness, he has the best claim to be considered the founder of Anarchism.[1]

The Anarchism of Proudhon forms a striking contrast to the Positive Sociocracy of Comte. These two systems represent the antithetic extremes of social theorising. The one springs from an exaggerated and exclusive conception of liberty, and the other from an equally exaggerated and exclusive conception of authority. Yet both led their authors to contemplate with satisfaction the prospect of national dismemberment. They agreed, although on very different grounds, in desiring that existing nations should be broken up into smaller communities concerning themselves chiefly or entirely with industrial interests. Where-

[1] Anarchism has gained a large host of adherents, and assumed a variety of forms. Russia, owing to easily perceptible causes, has been its chief hotbed and nursery. Its history, so full of political and pathological interest, has necessarily as yet been only very partially and superficially traced. Almost all self-conscious revolutionary radicalism is in the present day either anarchist or collectivist. Anarchists look for no good from the State, and seek to destroy it. Collectivists expect everything from the State, and strive to make it omnipotent.

in they differed was that while Comte approved of states of small size, because only such could, in his opinion, be adequately influenced and effectively controlled by the positivist priests and bankers in whose hands he hoped to see all spiritual and civil authority invested, Proudhon desired communes of limited extent, because he believed that only such could dispense with authority and organise themselves freely by association.[1] Proudhon has expounded his theory in a special work, 'De la Fédération.' And the theory there presented as the complement of Anarchism has had a far greater influence on practical politics than when exhibited in its Comtist form as a corollary from Sociocracy; but its influence has been the reverse of beneficent. Propagated by so fanatical and reckless an apostle as Bakunin, and adopted by Russian anarchists, Parisian communists, and Spanish federalists, it has been a source of serious disturbance and disaster in the Europe of recent years.

The doctrine favourable to small states or communities has found at least three ingenious and cultured advocates in France, the geographer Élise Reclus, and the journalists Justin Drommel and Odysse-Barot. It has been expounded with special attractiveness and skill in the 'Lettres sur la philosophie de l'histoire,' 1864, of the last-mentioned writer, and with the consideration of it as there presented I shall conclude my account of the historical speculations to which French socialism has given rise.[2]

The first nine letters of M. Barot deal with war and peace, military genius, the superiority of Frederick the Great to Cæsar

[1] Fourier, by his advocacy of the division and distribution of Europe into *phalanstères*, had preceded Comte and Proudhon in sacrificing historical nations to small, independent, and self-sufficing industrial societies, federatively connected.

[2] M. Odysse-Barot was an active coadjutor of the late M. Emile de Girardin in 'La Presse,' 'La Liberté,' and 'La France.' In 1871, he was secretary of Gustave Flourens and editor of 'Le Fédéraliste'; and from 1871 to 1874, an exile in England. His 'Histoire de la littérature contemporaine en Angleterre,' 1864, is a work of exceptional merit. His 'Letters on the Philosophy of History' appeared at first in 'La Presse,' and were addressed to M. de Girardin, whose criticism of them is appended to the volume of the 'Bibliothèque de Philosophie Contemporaine,' in which they were republished in 1864. As the criticism assumes that there is no difference between fact and right, and some other peculiar fancies of M. de Girardin, it is even less satisfactory than the theory criticised.

and Napoleon, diplomacy, treaties, and congresses. Their connecting thought is that society is constituted by two principles —force and justice—of which the former leads to war and finds expression in battles, while the latter tends to peace and finds expression in treaties. These two principles are compared to positive and negative electricity, the warm and cold currents of the Gulf Stream, the ebb and flow of the sea, the male and female, &c. They are held to be equally necessary, since the one supplements and completes the other, since right without force and force without right are alike nugatory and sterile. But force is described as the more prevalent. M. Barot has counted, he says, the years of war and peace and the treaties concluded and broken from the fifteenth century before Christ to the present time, and has found that there have been 3130 years of war to 227 of peace, and 8397 treaties sworn to be eternally observed, the mean duration of the eternities of which has been two years. War, he contends, is not accidental or contingent, but universal and necessary, having its primary cause in the essential nature of man, and its final cause in the essential nature of things. The progress of civilisation has, in his opinion, no tendency to destroy or even to diminish it.

With the tenth letter we reach the kernel of his theory. He here tells us that historical study has three stages, the empirical, the critical, and the philosophical, or the stages of fact, method, and law, of observation, classification, and generalisation; that it has now reached the second but not the third of these stages; that important materials, however, for a philosophy of history have been collected and prepared; and that the general conclusion which he himself proposes to expound is the result of ten years' research and reflection. He then attacks the notion that France is a single nationality, and that French unity has existed for ages. He insists that, on the contrary, France is only a geographical expression, and French unity a quite recent creation.

In the next letter M. Barot proceeds with his proof. He regards every State in Europe, except Portugal, Belgium, Holland, and Switzerland, as not a nationality, but "a composite of heterogeneous elements, a Macedonia of peoples, an ethnological harlequin, a social mosaic." He tells briefly the story

of the formation of the British empire through the union of Wales, Ireland, and Scotland with England; and gives a very interesting account of the slow and painful process by which what is called France was built up on the ruins of the independence of Normandy, Provence, Guienne, Gascony, Lorraine, and Brittany. Of course, he lays the greatest possible emphasis on the fact that each of the different peoples incorporated into Britain and France still retains its distinctive character and feelings.

He commences the twelfth letter with the prophecy that perhaps before the end of the century, and certainly before a hundred years have passed, the great States of Europe will be dismembered; that factitious nationalities will have given place to real nationalities; that Britain, for example, will be redistributed into four kingdoms, and France broken up into five States—France proper, Brittany, Aquitaine, Burgundy, and Lorraine. Such is the inevitable conclusion, he argues, of two principles which have taken root in the world, and can neither be arrested nor eradicated,—the principle of decentralisation and the principle of nationalities; the former meaning dismemberment, and the latter the system of small or natural States, as opposed to that of artificial or agglomerated States. But what is a natural State? a true or simple nationality? It is, M. Odysse-Barot asserts, neither a linguistic, nor an ethnological, nor a religious, nor a moral fact, nor a combination of these four orders of facts, but a purely geographical fact. "Une nationalité, c'est un bassin." The centre, the axis, of a real nation is a river. This, we are told, is a law which has no exception; and an attempt is made to show that geology and climatology accord with history in recommending the distribution of peoples according to basins.

In the following chapter a second so-called law is deduced from the first: "Une frontière, c'est une montagne." The two alleged laws are said completely to define what a natural nationality is. Then a third law is laid down as determining the whole course of the historical movement. "The world oscillates between two systems of society; simple and compound societies; natural nationalities and artificial agglomerations; peoples with frontiers and peoples without them; the

system of small states and the system of great empires." These two systems, according to M. Barot, regularly alternate, and historical progress is little else than the periodical return of the same facts and ideas. The system of agglomeration or of great empires being at present at its height, must be speedily succeeded by that of true nationalities. A confederation of such nationalities is what Europe will present in the near future. Small and natural States are those which are most favourable to civilisation and liberty, to material and moral wellbeing.

Such is the theory of M. Odysse-Barot. It seems to me that he has wholly failed to establish it. He has been particularly unfortunate in his search for "laws." The first two of his so-called laws are plainly not of the nature of laws at all; they are merely attempts, and very unsuccessful attempts, at definition. The third might reasonably pass for a law were it proved; but it is not proved.

"Nationality is a river-basin." This is affirmed to be a law without exception. In reality, it is a paradoxical assertion forced to serve as a definition. To give it some appearance of truth, our author finds it requisite to deny that there are any but three real nations in Europe. Perhaps he should have gone further, and denied that there are any real nations in the world. Even Egypt is not with strictness a basin, being bounded not by mountains but by a desert and a sea. If Great Britain were divided according to basins, it would contain far more States than four. But Great Britain never was divided in that way; nor, so far as I can discover, has any country of Europe been so divided within historical times; and certainly none has since national feeling made its appearance in history.

"A natural boundary is a mountain." This so-called law is of precisely the same character as the previous one: an attempt not to formulate a law but to define a fact, and an attempt which fails. Any line of demarcation whatever between two nations is a natural boundary; for what makes a boundary natural is nothing in itself, but the circumstance that it separates distinct nations. The line of contact is the natural boundary, whether it be mountain, or river, or sea, or

even merely a hedge or ditch. M. Odysse-Barot regards the sea as an unnatural boundary; but assuredly the inhabitants of Great Britain will not be found to agree with him. It is deeply to be regretted, indeed, that the principle of nationality should ever have been associated with the dogma of so-called natural boundaries. The association, or confusion, may be traced chiefly to an obscure and unscrupulous party in France before the Franco-German war, who wished their country to have the Rhine for a boundary; and, under the name of the Monroe doctrine, to a similar party in America, who wished the whole North American continent to become the seat of a single great republic. The theory advocated by these parties amounted to the virtual affirmation of an almost universal right of international robbery, since Russia, Prussia, Bavaria, Austria, and many other nations, have no more natural boundaries than the United States or France. The theory of M. Barot, although it equally conjoins the principle of nationality with the hypothesis of natural boundaries, is not fairly chargeable with affording either a provocation to international robbery, or a justification of such robbery. The nations, however, which venture to act on it cannot fail to be thereby involved in the horrors of civil war.

The two fictitious laws referred to reduce nationality, as M. Barot himself says, to "a geographical fact." But who does not see that this is a one-sided and exaggerated, a mean and narrow, view of nationality; and that geography, like race, language, religion, and unity of government, is merely one of the factors which contribute to form nationality? Geographical limits, identity of race and descent, community of speech and faith, the same government and the same political antecedents, participation in the same triumphs and the same disasters, all conduce to the rise and growth of nationality. Yet not one of them constitutes it, and not one of them will infallibly and in all circumstances generate it. It arises from the action of many and various causes. It is no natural quality, and no necessary product of natural forces, but a spiritual creation, a result of intellectual and moral development, merely influenced by natural forces and outward circumstances. To this extent all nationality is artificial, and it suffices to show

that the distinction between natural and artificial nationalities as drawn by M. Barot is inherently untenable.

For the third alleged law—"the world oscillates between a system of small States and a system of great empires"—no historical proof is attempted. But without ample proof we must decline to accept a proposition which identifies progress with oscillation, development with the incessant recurrence of the same facts and ideas. M. Odysse-Barot has so much faith in its truth that the prevalence of the system of large States appears to him enough of itself to warrant his prediction of the near advent of a system of small States. It does not seem to have occurred to him that the former system is a natural expression of economical and social conditions which are not likely to pass away in the course of a century; that it is implied in railways and telegraphs, and the gigantic proportions of modern industry and commerce, as well as of modern war, and will prevail so long as these continue. Divide France into five independent nations to-day, and the work of unification, by fair means and foul, by force, fraud, and honest exertion, will commence to-morrow. A great empire is now not more difficult to govern than a small State was formerly, while the disadvantages of small States are more numerous and decided.

A great European war would obviously tend not to destroy but to develop the prevalent system. The disintegration or dismemberment which is predicted will require to be realised, therefore, by an internal movement, by the irresistible enthusiasm of the populations of large empires for reorganisation according to "basins." But are "basins" at all likely so to inflame the imaginations of men? Is "a banner with the strange device" "Basins" at all likely so to terrify or so to charm the powers that be in Russia, Prussia, and Austria, in France, and Italy, and England, that they will hasten to parcel out their kingdoms into "natural nationalities," and forthwith retire in favour of Governments which can have only a fraction of their strength? What probability is there of Russia dividing herself according to river-basins, even if she possessed mountains enough to serve as natural boundaries to the territories through which they flow? And if Russia does not, how can Prussia? And if Prussia does not, how can France?

It is true, as M. Odysse-Barot points out, that a general movement in favour of decentralisation is discernible. But why should it end, as he infers it must, in dismemberment? Most peoples are suffering more or less from undue centralisation, and nature and reason are prompting them to seek a remedy for the evil. But the remedy for one evil is not another evil, although its contrary. The remedy for the evils of excessive centralisation is not dismemberment, but simply a reasonable decentralisation, the limitation of the central power, and the leaving to provinces and municipalities the management of properly provincial and municipal affairs. It is to add to the advantages of general unity those of local and personal liberty, and to avoid excesses on either side.

CHAPTER VIII.

SPIRITUALISTIC MOVEMENT: SO-CALLED ECLECTIC AND DOCTRINARIAN HISTORICAL PHILOSOPHY.

I.

THE Theocratic movement in the France of the nineteenth century was mainly a reaction from the mode of treating religion and religious authority prevalent in the eighteenth century. The Socialistic movement originated in a recoil from the ethical and politico-economic principles and ideals which gained ascendancy in the same period. There was, however, another and profounder movement; one which started with rejection of the exclusive sensationalism and negative rationalism implied in the religious and social theories against which Theocracy and Socialism were protests.

This movement of philosophical reaction and revival found a brilliant leader in Victor Cousin (1792-1867). He began to teach philosophy when twenty-three years of age, and in singularly conspicuous and influential positions. His philosophical studies had been brief and slight, so that he had largely to learn what he taught while teaching it, and in the intervals of leisure which a jealous Government gave him by suspending his courses. He had to borrow largely from such sources as were most easily accessible to him, and probably often required to extemporise his thoughts as well as his words. When forty years of age his career as a public teacher of philosophy, and also as a productive speculative thinker, was brought to a close, and gave place to one of political and administrative activity. Thenceforth, although

he long powerfully influenced the fortunes of philosophy in France, it was as an educational reformer, the defender of the liberties of the university against the assaults of Ultramontanism, the dispenser of the patronage of chairs of philosophy, and the incessant and sagacious exciter of others to philosophical research and labour. That the philosophy which he propounded in the courses of lectures delivered by him between 1815 and 1833 should have been one far from quite consistent with itself at all stages of its evolution, or either thoroughly thought out as a whole, or carefully enough tested in many of its details, was inevitable. But that it had also remarkable merits which go far to explain and justify its extraordinary success, and that its influence on the thought of France was in the highest degree stimulating, must in justice be admitted.

Cousin made apparent how inadequate the theory of knowledge of the ideologists was in itself, and as a basis for philosophy. He set forth with a powerful and attractive eloquence a view of philosophy which showed how comprehensive and important it really is, and what its true place and functions are in human life and universal history. He contended for a method of philosophical investigation appropriate in its character to the nature, and conformed in its processes to the variety and vastness, of philosophy itself; and traced to defectiveness of method what is erroneous in empiricism and transcendentalism, scepticism and mysticism. He showed more truthfully than had been previously done how philosophy is related to its own history. He drew a luminous and masterly general sketch of that history, and instituted into special points and particular sections of it original investigations which were, perhaps, none the less fruitful for being fragmentary. He translated and interpreted Plato; commented on Aristotle; edited Proclus, Abelard, and Descartes; promoted the study in France of Reid, Stewart, and Hamilton, of Kant, Schelling, and Hegel; and instigated a host of gifted men to rethink for the benefit of their contemporaries all past philosophies,—to reproduce, criticise, and judge, in new conditions and under fresh and fuller lights, the views and systems of the great thinkers of humanity in all lands and ages. He

expounded with consummate literary skill in the most celebrated of his philosophical writings, 'Du Vrai, du Beau, et du Bien,' the main conclusions at which he had arrived in psychology, in metaphysics and theodicy, in ethics, and in æsthetics. As regards psychology, his proof of the irreducibility of sensation, will, and reason to a single principle was of vital importance; his account of intelligence as spontaneous and reflective had much influence; and his theory of the impersonality of reason was worthy of all the attention which it has received. As to metaphysics and theodicy, he based them on the most solid foundations, gave prominence to the truths which deserved it, and committed himself to the defence of few untenable positions. Alike as regards spirit and substance his ethical teaching was admirable. And although his solutions of the chief problems of æsthetics were vague and inadequate, his criticisms of antecedent and contemporary theories were relevant and decisive, and prepared the way for such investigations as those to which we owe the 'Cours d'Esthétique' of Jouffroy and 'La Science du Beau' of Lêvêque.

Notwithstanding what I have just said, I admit that Cousin was much better qualified to draw up philosophical programmes than to realise them; that he showed little taste for psychological research; that he was not a metaphysician of the first order; that he overlooked the connections of physical science with philosophy; and that he sometimes made fine words pass for great thoughts, and displayed his rhetorical gifts to excess. Hence in the representation of him given by Taine and Lewes there is the modicum of truth which is indispensable to give verisimilitude to caricature. A gross caricature, however, it is, and not a portrait of the man, who is justly entitled to be regarded as the most notable and influential personage in far the most comprehensive and fruitful philosophical movement which France has felt in the nineteenth century.[1]

[1] See on Cousin the 'Éloges' of Mignet and Jules Favre; Taine, 'Philosophes français'; Renan, 'Essais de morale et de critique'; Franck, 'Moralistes et philosophes,' and 'Nouveaux essais de critique philosophique'; Caro, 'Philosophie et philosophes'; and especially Paul Janet, 'Victor Cousin et son œuvre,' 1885, and Jules Simon, 'Victor Cousin,' 1887. His general philosophy has been treated of by Damiron, Bersot, Alaux, Secretan, Ravaisson, Ferraz, &c. He has himself described in the famous prefaces to the first two editions of his 'Frag-

The greatest service rendered by Cousin to philosophy was one which was also a direct service to the philosophy of history. It was the impulse which he gave to a truly philosophical and at the same time truly historical study of the history of philosophy. With marvellous success he induced men to interest themselves in the history of philosophy as being philosophy itself in the process of evolution; and to study it as such in a free, critical, and impartial spirit. It will be said, and with perfect justice, that Hegel had preceded him in so conceiving of the relation of philosophy to its history; and that he had even applied his conception by treating of the history of philosophy with a profundity and subtlety of which Cousin was incapable. But in this reference a very important difference between them must be noted. Hegel went to the history of philosophy in order to show that its whole evolution was an exemplification of the philosophy which he had elaborated; Cousin went to it in order to be guided to a philosophy which he wished to discover. Hegel construed the history to make it conform to his speculative conclusions; Cousin was content to study it without any other assumption than that if examined impartially and comprehensively it would lead to the discovery of a catholic eclecticism which would separate the true from the false in all anterior systems, and harmonise all truths in them which had hitherto appeared inconsistent and antagonistic. This, however, is equivalent to saying that Hegel's method of treating the history of philosophy was directly anti-scientific and unreasonable, while Cousin's was legitimate and appropriate.

It was in the lectures delivered at Paris in 1828 to an admiring audience of two thousand persons that he propounded his historical theories; and it is only with that part of his system which relates to history that I mean to deal. It was the last part added, and it is that on which the influence of Hegel is most apparent. As regards this influence, it must be remembered that although Hegel's 'Philosophy of History' was only published in 1837, Cousin was not only acquainted

ments' the successive steps of his philosophical career with great candour, and with a truth which can be easily substantiated by an examination of his works in their chronological order.

with the outlines of world-history contained in the 'Encyclopædia' (1817) and the 'Philosophy of Right' (1820); but during a stay of some months at Berlin in 1824-25 had met Hegel, and become intimate with some of his most zealous disciples, Gans, Hotho, Henning, and Michelet; and again in 1827 had enjoyed a month of Hegel's society in Paris. It is very probable, therefore, that Cousin derived his views on historical optimism, war, great men, and some of the other subjects treated by him in the 'Cours de 1828' directly or indirectly from Hegel. Certainly his intercourse with Hegel must have confirmed him in them. As he has generally stated them with more clearness and more appearance of proof than Hegel, I shall discuss them as he has presented them, and shall not consider it necessary to dwell on them when Hegel comes under review.

The general aim of the first three lectures is to determine the place of philosophy and of its history within universal history. Psychological analysis is maintained to be indispensable to the accomplishment of the task. The various manifestations and phases of social life are all traced back to the tendencies of human nature from which they spring; to five fundamental wants, each of which has corresponding to it a general idea. The idea of the useful gives rise to mathematical and physical science, industry and political economy; the idea of the just to civil society, the State, and jurisprudence; the idea of the beautiful to art; the idea of God to religion and worship; and the idea of truth in itself, in its highest degree and under its purest form, to philosophy. These ideas are argued to be simple and indecomposable; to coexist in every mind; to constitute the whole foundation of humanity; and to follow in the order mentioned. But if human nature manifests itself in the individual, it manifests itself also in the race, the history of which is, in fact, but the representation of human nature on a great scale. There is in the race only the elements which are in the individual. The unity of civilisation is in the unity of human nature; its varieties are in the variety of the elements of that nature. All that is in human nature passes into the movement of civilisation, to subsist, organise itself, and prospers, if essential and necessary, but soon to be

extinguished if accidental and individual. Therefore, as human nature is the matter and the base of history, history is, so to speak, the judge of human nature, and historical analysis is the counterproof of psychological analysis. History, called in to the help of analysis, shows us that civilisation — the magnified image of human nature—includes at all epochs a philosophic element, which has a distinct, always subsisting, and continually increasing part or history on the stage of the world; and that what philosophy is to the other elements of human nature and civilisation, the history of philosophy is to the other branches of universal history. It shows us that the history of philosophy is the last of all the developments of history, but superior to them all,—the only one in which humanity knows itself fully, with all its elements borne, as it were, to their highest power, and set in their truest and clearest light.

In the fourth lecture M. Cousin treats of the psychological method in history. He argues that the historical method can be neither exclusively empirical nor exclusively speculative, by which he means deductive, but both in union; and that, combining speculation with empiricism in a legitimate manner, it must start from the human reason, enumerate completely its elements, reduce them by a severely scientific analysis to the lowest number possible, determine their relationship, and follow their development in history, with the hope of discovering that the historical development is an expression of the internal development of reason. Accordingly, he sets about laying the foundation of this method by a study of the categories of thought. He reaches the result that in the last analysis the constitutive and regulative principles of reason are three: the idea of the infinite, otherwise called unity, substance, the absolute, &c.; the idea of the finite, likewise designated plurality, difference, phenomenon, relative existence, the conditioned, &c.; and the idea of the relation between the infinite and the finite, a relation which so unites the two terms that they are inseparable, and, along with itself, constitute, at the same time, a triplicity and an indivisible unity.[1]

[1] It has been considered expedient to distinguish the expository and critical portions of this chapter by printing the former in larger, and the latter in smaller, print.

Cousin had the great merit of seeing that psychology and the philosophy of history are intimately related. He perceived that the latter has its root in the former; that the science of history is properly a psychological science; that it presupposes a knowledge of the fundamental powers, affections, and laws of the human mind and character; and that historical analysis may supplement and correct, but can neither be severed from nor substituted for psychological analysis. Probably no one before him had seen so clearly that "necessity of connecting all our generalisations from history with the laws of human nature," the honour of recognising which J. S. Mill most erroneously ascribed to "M. Comte alone, among the new historical school."

It must be admitted, however, that Cousin was far from entirely faithful to his own doctrine. Indeed, he had no sooner enunciated it than he to a large extent implicitly withdrew it by surreptitiously substituting human reason for human nature. What warrant is there for this? Why limit the field from which deductions applicable to history may be drawn to reason, a single part or faculty of human nature? Why exclude anything truly belonging to that nature? Cousin does not give any explicit reasoned answer. He makes an attempt to show that in every act of consciousness the three terms or ideas which have been specified are involved as conditions, and forthwith proceeds to argue as if he had thereby reduced all the phenomena of consciousness to these terms, in strange obliviousness of there being a great difference between the detection of the formal or metaphysical conditions of consciousness and the analysis of consciousness into its real or psychological elements. It does not appear to have occurred to him that he might have succeeded in discovering the ultimate categories of reason, and yet have the inquiry into human nature as the basis of history to begin; that the conditions implied in the possibility of reason are not the laws of the development of reason, and still less of those principles which are distinct from reason. He abandons, in fact, without seeming to know that he is doing so, the great truths with which he starts: that the matter of history is human nature in its entirety, in all its wants, faculties, and principles; and that a science of history can be founded on no narrower basis than the whole of psychological science supplies. He seeks to build not on the whole mind, but on reason alone, or rather not even on reason, as a positive principle of the mental constitution and life—which is the only sense in which it is a true factor of history—but on abstract ideas of reason with which metaphysics is conversant, but with which the science of history has no more to do than the science of chemistry. He thus sacrifices in practice the important truths which he holds in theory.

The next three lectures treat of the fundamental ideas of

history, the great epochs of history, and the plan of history. The reduction of reason into three ideas is supposed to have already determined all the conclusions to be come to on these points, and the course of actual history is referred to only as affording illustrations of truths obtained independently of the study of it.[1]

The development of intelligence is described as of a twofold nature, spontaneous and reflective. The spontaneous development, taking place in all men without exception, instinctively and involuntarily, is a primitive, impersonal, and universal fact. The reflective development, displaying itself in a marked degree only in the philosophical few, is a secondary, personal, and particular fact. Reflection presupposes and is occasioned by spontaneity. It is a sort of reversal of the spontaneous process, a going over it again from the opposite point, an analysing of it, a scrutiny of its conditions and rules. It adds nothing new, nothing of its own, to it; but only seeks to account for it, to find how it has reached its present stage and character, out of what principles it has grown up, and what elements it includes. To effect this end it is necessitated to decompose, separate, distinguish. To apprehend clearly the different constituent elements which are all confusedly united in spontaneous consciousness, it must apprehend them one by one, and while intent on the contemplation of any one must extrude the others from its sight.

Hence clearness, but hence also error. Error is one of the elements of thought taken for the whole of thought; an incomplete truth converted into absolute truth. No other error is possible, because thought, if it exist at all, must possess some one of the elements which constitute it, some element of reality. Reflection, therefore, always includes truth, and almost always error, because it is almost always incomplete. And error necessitates difference between men. The primitive unity of spontaneous intelligence, not supposing distinction, admits neither of error nor difference; but reflection, in dis-

[1] I leave unnoticed, as properly falling within the provinces of the theologian and metaphysician, what is said in these lectures as to the ideas of the infinite, finite, and the relation of the infinite and finite, belonging not to man, but to absolute intelligence, constituting the nature of Deity, and necessitating and explaining the creation of the universe.

criminating the elements of thought, and considering them separately and exclusively, produces error, and variety of error or difference. Hence the different epochs of individual existence, which are only the stages caused by a change in ideas, by variations in the points of view of reflection.

Hence, further, the differences of men compared with one another. It is impossible for them to agree together to consider at the same time the same side of thought and of things, and so they necessarily differ, fail to comprehend one another, and even despise one another. He who is exclusively preoccupied with the idea of unity and infinity, pities the man who enjoys the finite world, life in its movement and variety; and he who is wholly attached to the interests and pleasures of this world, regards as a fool the man whose thoughts and affections are centred on the invisible principle of existence. Most men are thus merely halves or quarters of men, and can become entire men only by delivering themselves from the exclusiveness which renders them unable to comprehend others, and by realising in themselves all the elements of humanity.

It is with the human race as with individuals. What reflection is to the individual, history is to the race. It is the condition of the successive evolution of all the essential elements of humanity, and has consequently epochs, an epoch being nothing else than the predominance of one of the elements of humanity during the time necessary for it to display all the powers which are in it, and to impress itself upon industry, the State, art, religion, and philosophy. As the essential elements of thought are three, no more and no less, the epochs of history must be three, no more and no less. The three elements are, indeed, to some extent in each epoch; but each one of them, in order to run through its whole development, must have an epoch to itself. The three epochs succeed each other in a necessary order. It is not man himself, not the sentiment of the *me* and of liberty, which is dominant in new-born reflection, but the sense of feebleness, the consciousness of dependence upon the infinite, upon God: and as it is thus in the individual life, so, too, the first epoch of humanity is necessarily pervaded with the sentiment of the misery and nothingness of man, and filled with the idea of the infinite, of unity, of the absolute, and of eternity.

The growth of reflection in the individual gives rise to a feeling of personal freedom and power; and equally the exercise of liberty leads humanity to feel the charm of the world and of life, and to yield itself up exclusively thereto, which is the reign of personality, the epoch of the finite. Having exhausted the extremes, there is nothing left either for the individual or the race but to unite and harmonise them; and so the two epochs of the infinite and finite are necessarily succeeded by a third which reconciles them and sums them up, impressing everywhere upon industry, the State, art, religion, and philosophy, the relation of the finite and the infinite, and thus gives to that relation its own expression in history, its own empire.

Such are the epochs of history, and the order of their succession; but under the relation of succession lies one of generation. The first epoch of humanity begets the second, and the fertile residua of the two first epochs combine to produce the third. Although the different epochs of humanity are wholes which have each a life of its own, humanity itself is an active and productive force which pervades them all, and an organic whole which comprehends them all. The truth of history is therefore not a dead truth, or one confined to any particular age, but a living and growing truth, which comes forth gradually from the harmonious work of ages, and which is nothing less than the progressive birth of humanity. It is more. History reflects not merely the movement of humanity, but of God's action on and in humanity. It is the government of God made visible. And as His government must be like His character, perfect, everything in history must be in its place, must be reasonable, and for the greatest good of all things.

This is M. Cousin's celebrated theory of historical development, stated, as far as possible, in the words of its author. It is impossible to deny to it a certain sort of grandeur and plausibility; but it fails at almost every point to satisfy the legitimate demands of science.

The distinction between spontaneity and reflection with which it starts was one to which M. Cousin attached great importance, but which he never succeeded in clearly and distinctly apprehending. He regarded spontaneous reason as reason in itself, as absolute or impersonal reason, as consequently incapable of error, and a sure foundation for the authority of universal beliefs; and reflective reason as that which is modified and guided by will, the principle, according to

him, in which personality consists; and therefore as individual, variable, and subject to error. Now this is untenable. Spontaneous thought does not differ from reflective thought by being unaccompanied and uninfluenced by will. The progress of spontaneous thought, like all progress in thought, implies throughout the active concurrence of the will with the intelligence. In the course of that progress, which embraces human history in all its length and breadth, arts have been invented and sciences evolved, poems written, moral creeds elaborated, religions established, complex and durable civilisations built up: and although the mind has not proceeded along this lengthened road with a clear perception of the goal to which it leads, neither has it taken steps in utter darkness; and as little has it been driven on by any fatalistic force either over it or within it. It has had light and freedom sufficient to make it responsible for each successive step, as it became right that it should be taken. The will has everywhere been present, choice everywhere called for, error everywhere possible. To speak, as M. Cousin does of spontaneous intelligence as instinctive, is, taken literally, no less absurd than to speak of white blackness or a circular square.

Further, M. Cousin, instead of drawing a consistent distinction, has merely mixed up and confounded a number of distinctions. When he distinguishes spontaneous from reflective intelligence by characterising the former as immediate, involuntary, and incapable of error, the only real mental fact which corresponds to it is perception external or internal, and reflection includes the whole of what is commonly called thought. This, however, was by no means the distinction which he wished to draw.

While, however, a part of what we are told of the distinction between spontaneity and reflection is true only of the distinction between perception and thought, another part of it is true only of that between ordinary and scientific thought, or, more accurately, between the lower and higher stages of thought. When spontaneous intelligence is described as comparatively obscure and confused, reflective intelligence as comparatively clear and distinct; when it is admitted that the former really, although slowly, progresses through the ages, and constitutes the thinking of the mass of men, while the latter is characteristic of the philosophic few,—a difference of degree is presented to us as a distinction of kind. Science differs from ordinary knowledge not absolutely or specifically, but relatively and in degree. Science has grown out of ordinary knowledge, and ordinary knowledge is on the way to become science. The knowledge which enables the rudest savage to satisfy his simplest wants, and the broadest and best-established generalisations of the most advanced living astronomer or chemist, are merely the extremes of a process which has been continuous, and which has gradually filled up the whole distance between them.

Then, another, a third distinction seems to be the only one which will answer to that part of M. Cousin's account which refers the origin of religion and poetry to spontaneity, and of philosophy to reflection—viz., the distinction between thought combined with and thought separated from emotion. This, also, is only a difference of degree; for a complete severance of thought from emotion is impossible; and it is further, properly speaking, no division of thoughts themselves into kinds.

And there is at least another, a fourth distinction with which that under consideration is identified: that of thought which works on objects given to it, and of thought which makes itself its own object; of thought which deals with exterior things in order to ascertain their natures and laws, and of thought which studies and analyses its own processes. This *is* a distinction of kind and not of mere degree; for, thus understood, reflection is not the continuance of spontaneity, not a further stage of the same process, although it presupposes and is occasioned by it; but is a sort of reversal of it, a going over it again from an opposite point and with an opposite aim. It is only when M. Cousin's distinction of spontaneous and reflective intelligence is understood as equivalent to this distinction that the statement that reflection, in going over the processes of spontaneous thought, adds to them nothing new, and not a few other statements which he has made, can be received as true. Perhaps the general impression his account leaves is that this was the distinction he had in view, but that he altogether failed to steady his eye upon it. It was certainly, I think, the distinction which he should have drawn, and to which he should have exclusively adhered.

But then, if this be the distinction, spontaneous intelligence may be very clear and precise, and reflective intelligence very obscure and confused. The great mass of thought will be what is called spontaneous thought, and it need not necessarily be vaguer, or shorter, or easier than reflective thought. There is probably no psychological analysis which has displayed so much perspicacity, vigour, concentration, and perseverance of mind, as the discovery of the law of gravitation, an achievement of spontaneous research. The spontaneous intelligence, in this acceptation of the term, originates not only the simplest but the subtlest inventions; apprehends not only the most obvious but the most recondite truths. It is to it, and not to reflective intelligence, thus distinguished, that the world owes its religions, its legislations, its arts, its industries, its sciences, and even far the larger portion of its philosophy.

M. Cousin has not succeeded, then, in distinguishing between spontaneous and reflective intelligence, although there is a real distinction between them on which he has occasionally touched. Had he apprehended it more clearly and consistently, he would have seen

that it could not possibly be applied to history in the way he attempted. If reflection be restricted to denote that kind of thought which has its origin in the conviction that processes of mind require explanation no less than processes of matter; and that if the mind will only turn its eye inwards—will only bend its attention back upon itself, and study these processes—an explanation of them may be reached; and if spontaneity be understood as comprehending all other thought; the notion that the whole mass of thought in individuals, nations, and humanity is set in motion and kept in motion by the action of reflection, ceases to be in any degree plausible. Reflection must then be admitted to be a kind of thought, which, instead of setting all other thought in motion, makes its own appearance only when most other kinds of thought have already run a lengthened course; only after notable results have been reached in science, art, morals, and religion. Instead of determining the general movement of thought, it must be determined by it; and instead of imposing a law of movement on spontaneous thought, a law of movement already there must comprehend and regulate its own movement. But this means ruin to M. Cousin's theory; it is the pulling out of its foundation-stone. If true, whatever be the cause of historical movement, that cause cannot be the decomposition of spontaneous thought into its essential elements under the action of reflection; and whatever be the law of historical movement, that law cannot be the inability of reflection to think more than one of these elements at a time, or in any other order than that of infinite, finite, and relation of finite and infinite. Both cause and law must be looked for elsewhere. The attention must no longer be confined to the relation of one kind of thought to another; but the whole movement of thought must be studied in itself, and in relation to nature.

But may not, it will be said, spontaneous thought, although it move independently of the impulse of reflection, still, in the course of its movement, manifest one of its elements after another, so that each element shall have an epoch to itself after the manner indicated by Cousin? I think not. If spontaneous intelligence develop, and if there are certain elements so essentially constitutive of it as to be included in its every act, it is hard to see how all these elements can fail to be continuously and contemporaneously developed, and especially how they can be so separated as to be the distinctive principles of historical epochs of immense duration. And whether such a successive development of the elements of reason be possible or not, obviously every presumption adduced by M. Cousin in its favour is swept away by the dispersion of the confused augmentation on which he rests it. Any presumptions or probabilities which remain point to the opposite conclusion. Thus the speculative grounds on which Cousin bases his hypothesis of a successive separate development of the elements of intelligence in successive historical

epochs are undermined; and it is on these grounds that he has chiefly rested it. Indeed it may be said to have been exclusively on these grounds, there being nothing else adduced in its favour except a passing assurance that the actual course of history is found to confirm the conclusion which they, according to him, support.

The ultimate appeal, however, must be to the facts themselves. What, then, do they say? Do they substantiate the notion of three historical epochs, the first characterised by the supremacy of the infinite, the second of the finite, and the third of the relation of the infinite and finite? To my thinking, they do not. The epoch of the infinite, according to M. Cousin, was that of the East, where everything was more or less immobile, industry feeble, the arts gigantic and monstrous, the laws of the State fixed and immutable, religion a longing after absorption in the invisible, and philosophy the contemplation of absolute unity. Well, was the East in any form in which this description can be regarded as even approximately true, the first epoch of history? Is it possible for us seriously to hold it was? M. Cousin, while believing in a primitive revelation, an age of gold, the Eden of poetry and religion, discarded the question of a primitive people, as more embarrassing than important, and as not properly belonging to history, which, strictly, is only where difference and development are. So be it. But was there no long interval, no time of difference and development, of struggle and evolution, no epoch between Eden and the East described by M. Cousin? Did the latter spring immediately out of the former? There was, we may be certain, a long interval, and no immediate connection, or even sudden growth. The East presents us with several elaborate and artificial civilisations, but with none which we have reason to suppose dates from Eden; on the contrary, we have more or less evidence of their having developed gradually from simple, if not barbarous, conditions of society. But rude and simple peoples, still more barbarous peoples, are never found absorbed in the contemplation of the infinite, and of absolute unity. The Brahmins and Buddhists of Asia may be so; but the low and sensuous populations which the Aryans encountered in India on their arrival were not; and these Aryans themselves—the Vedic hymns show us—were, so far from being at first weighed down with a sense of the infinite, feebly and dimly conscious of any such feeling, while keenly alive to the phases and impressions of nature, and to the interests of a life, healthy, varied, mobile, active, and, in a word, all that, according to M. Cousin, life in the epoch of the infinite should not have been.

This is not all. M. Cousin applies his description of the epoch of the infinite to *the East*. But the East is a very wide word. Did M. Cousin realise how comprehensive it was? A little inquiry shows us that he did not. His description of the East is to a con-

siderable extent true of India, after the definite establishment of Brahminism, but of no other Eastern nation; it characterises not very inaccurately a stage of Hindu life, but it most unwarrantably professes to be a delineation of the whole life and history of Asia plus Egypt. There is, for instance, no country in Europe to which that description of the East applies *less* than to China. It is true, indeed, that China affords a good example of comparative immobility; but nothing can be more absurd than to suppose that immobility due to the absorption of the Chinese mind in the study of the infinite and the absolute. That mind is exceptionably indifferent and dead to these things; strangely atheistic and materialistic; engrossed in the finite; indefatigable in the pursuit of earthly gains; greedy of sensuous joys. It might readily be shown that M. Cousin's description also fails to answer to the monarchies of Middle Asia and to Egypt. And although it should be granted that the Jewish people was distinguished by its consciousness of the presence of an infinite and eternal God and Judge, it must at the same time be maintained that that consciousness elicited instead of crushing the sense of personality, freedom, responsibility; and that it proved itself to be in no wise incompatible with vigour and enterprise.

There is yet another difficulty. The epoch of the infinite comes to an end. When? M. Cousin answers: *When the infinite is exhausted in every direction.* And it appears not to have occurred to him that there need be any hesitation in accepting the answer. But surely it is a most mysterious, if not a self-contradictory one, and the very reverse of explanatory. How can the infinite be *exhausted* in *any* direction? and much more, in *every* direction?

The epoch of the finite M. Cousin finds in the history of classical antiquity. In describing it, however, he keeps his eye exclusively fixed on Greece; and yet entirely overlooks the obvious difficulty, that if the finite realised itself so admirably in Greece, it should not have reappeared in a less perfect form in Rome. This difficulty he could not have got over by saying that in Greece the finite did not impress itself on all the phases of life, and therefore had to continue itself in Rome; because, according to his own teaching, the *last* phase of life on which an idea *can* impress itself is the philosophical; and it is certainly not true that Rome was, and Greece was not, a philosophical nation. In order that the finite should have had all its development, he tells us that it must have had an almost exclusive development, unhindered by any movement of the infinite; and accordingly he describes Greece as having been wholly dominated by the idea of the finite. But he thereby only shows how dangerous is the kind of historical speculation in which he indulges. For the sake of his formula, he has to ignore the plainest teaching of such expressions of Grecian life as the mysteries, metaphysics, and tragedy; has to mutilate the facts, or notice only those which suit the foregone

conclusion, seeing that, looked at fairly and fully, they would show Greece to have contributed very greatly to the development of the ideas of the infinite and of the absolute. Greece certainly did not represent the infinite less than China, nor did it even represent the finite more. The superiority of Greece over the East lay, not in carrying the finite farther—which would have been no merit or progress—but in having a truer sense of beauty of form, of proportion, of harmony. Of course finiteness and form are very different things; and a graceful form is no more finite, or suggestive of the finite, than one which is the reverse.

To the modern world—the third epoch—is assigned the task of apprehending and expressing the relation of the infinite and finite. How this can be done, apart from the development of the related ideas, M. Cousin does not show. Neither does he show that the effort to reconcile these two ideas is really distinctive of the modern world. And this for the good reason that such is not the case. It is impossible to study the Hindu philosophies without coming to the conclusion that their object was not the infinite to the exclusion of, but in relation to, the finite; nor the Greek philosophies without similarly discovering that their object was not the finite in itself, but in its connection with the infinite.

Tested, then, by the facts, this distribution of epochs is found to be false. Whatever be the plan of history, it cannot be that drawn by M. Cousin. And there is some comfort in this reflection, seeing that he denies our race a future. There can be, he tells us, no new epoch of history. "Try," he says, "to add a fourth. It is not in the power of thought, I do not say to succeed in it, but even to attempt it; for thought is able to conceive of anything only by reason of the finite, of the infinite, and of their relation." Had there been no other objection to M. Cousin's theory than that it logically involved the dogmatic denial of the possibility of any new epoch of history in the future, I should consider that in itself to outweigh any reasons he has given for it. It is true he tries to break the force of the objection by saying that the present epoch is only emerging from the stage of barbarism. This assertion, however, is not only unsupported by any appeal to facts, but is in manifest contradiction to his account of what determines the completion of an epoch, and to the character which he ascribes to his own philosophy as an all-comprehensive, all-reconciling eclecticism.

M. Cousin, as I have indicated, concludes his exposition of the plan of history by a profession of his faith in historical optimism. "History is the government of God made visible; and hence everything is there in its place: and if everything is there in its place, everything is there for good; for everything arrives at an end, marked by a beneficent power." It is marvellous how our author could fancy he was entitled to believe so great a theory on such a

faint appearance of reason. There are things without number which, our intellects and consciences testify, appear to be indubitably out of place, bad, and mischievous. If it can be shown that they are not what they appear to be—not really bad, but really good—let it be done; but let us not ignore the facts, or affirm without examination, that they are just the opposite of what they seem, on no better ground than an enthymeme so contemptible as that God is good, and therefore everything is good.

There are still three lectures of Cousin to notice, and they treat of places, nations, and great men; because these are the three things by which the spirit of an epoch manifests itself,—the three important points on which the historian ought to fix his attention.

As to the first—places, the part of geography in history, which is the subject of the eighth lecture—the substance of M. Cousin's teaching is as follows: Everything in the world has a meaning; nothing is insignificant; and consequently every place necessarily represents an idea,—one of the ideas which underlie and connect all other ideas. The relation of man to nature is not one of effect to cause; but man and nature are two great effects of the same cause, so harmoniously correspondent to each other that, given a country, you may tell what the people will be, or, given a people, what sort of country they must inhabit. No place represents more than one idea. The three great epochs must therefore have three different theatres. If we consider what these must be, we shall be forced to conclude that the theatre of the epoch of the infinite can only be an extensive continent with vast plains and almost impassable mountains, and bordering upon the ocean; that of the finite, countries comparatively small, on the shores of some inland sea; and that of the relation of the finite to the infinite, a continent of considerable size, bordering on the ocean, yet possessing inland seas, sufficiently yet not too compact, and varied in its configuration and climate. In other words, these theatres must be—for the infinite, Asia; for the finite, Greece and Italy; and for the relation of the finite to the infinite, Europe.

The following remarks may be made on this theory. First, Although M. Cousin starts with the affirmation that every thing, and

consequently every place, in the world, has a meaning, or represents an idea, the result of the survey which he takes of the earth to illustrate it is, that the greater part of Africa and the whole American continent have no meaning and represent no idea. Two contradictory propositions pervade the lecture. The one is, God made every place to represent an idea; and the other is, He made only some places to represent ideas,—or, in other words, made some, and notably America—to represent none.

Secondly, Although everywhere nature influences man and man nature—although everywhere man conforms his habits to his habitat, and modifies matter to serve his ends—and everywhere the character of a land impresses itself on the intellect, imagination, and feelings of its inhabitants, and so enters, as it were, into their moral being and national life,—it is, nevertheless, great exaggeration to say, as M. Cousin does, "Give me the map of a country—its configuration, its climate, its waters, its winds, its natural productions, its botany, its zoology, and all its physical geography—and I pledge myself to tell you what will be the man of this country, and what place this country will occupy in history." Man has other relations than to nature, and some as important; and to judge of him by that one relationship alone can never lead us to the knowledge of what he is, nor of what his history must be.

Thirdly, The way in which M. Cousin conceives of the relation of nature to man is vain and fanciful. It is not as a relation of cause and effect, of action and reaction, of mutual influence, but of effects designed to correspond to each other, of a pre-established harmony like that which Leibniz supposed to exist between the body and the soul. This notion is not only purely conjectural, but inconsistent with the innumerable facts which manifest that nature does influence man, and that man does modify nature. It is impossible to hold, either in regard to the body and soul, or in regard to nature and man, *both* the theory of mutual influence and of pre-established harmony. All that, in either case, proves the former, disproves the latter. The belief in a pre-established harmony between man and nature is, indeed, considerably more absurd than in a pre-established harmony between the body and soul; for when a body is born a soul is in it, which remains in it till death, and is never known to leave it in order to take possession of some other body: but every country is not created with a people in it, nor is every people permanently fixed to a particular country. Imagination may be deceived for a moment by an obvious process of association into this belief of certain peoples being suited for certain lands, independently of the action of natural causes—the Greeks, let us say, for Greece, the Indian for the prairies and forests of America, the Malayan for the islands of the Indian Archipelago; but a moment's thought on the fact that the Turk has settled down where the Greeks used to be, that mighty nations of

English-speaking men are rising up where the Indian roamed, and that Dutchmen are thriving in the lands of the Malayan, should suffice to disabuse us.

Besides, just as the dictum "Marriages are made in heaven" is seriously discredited by the great number that are badly made, so the kindred opinion that every country gets the people which suits it, and every people the country, as a direct and immediate consequence of their pre-established harmony, is equally discredited by the prevalence of ill-assorted unions, a great many worthless peoples living in magnificent lands, while far better peoples have much worse ones.

The ninth lecture treats of nations. They exist, we are told, to represent ideas comprehended under the general idea of the epoch to which they belong. In order to understand a nation, the philosophy of history must ascertain the idea it is meant to represent; the stage it has reached in the realisation of that idea; the evolution of the idea in industry, laws, art, religion, and philosophy; and the order of sequence and subordination among these elements. It is only through reaching the truth on all these points that we can escape partial and narrow views. The nations of an epoch necessarily have resemblances greater than their differences since they belong to the same epoch, but necessarily have differences since they have separate or independent existence. Philosophy, seeing that the differences of nations—that is, their particular ideas—are incomplete truths, can look upon them all not only with toleration but with favour; and humanity will be taught to do the same by its own history in the course of ages. Nations themselves, however, cannot fail to regard their particular ideas as absolute and complete truths, entitled to universal and exclusive dominion. Hence the origin of war, which is simply the violent encounter or collision of the particular ideas of different nations. The certain and inevitable result of war is the triumph of the stronger over the weaker idea—of the nation which has its time to serve over that which has served its time. War is necessary and beneficial, because it is the condition and means of progress. A battle is nothing else than the combat of error with truth, and victory nothing else than the triumph of the truth of to-day over the truth of yesterday, which has become the error of to-day. It is a mistake to speak of chance in war—the dice are loaded; humanity loses not a single game; not

one battle has taken a turn unfavourable to civilisation. Nor is war only necessary and useful: it is also just. The conquered party always deserves its fate; and the conquering party triumphs because it is better, more provident, wiser, braver, and more meritorious than its foe. War is action on a great scale, and as such the test and measure of a nation's worth. In the military history and military organisation of a people its whole spirit and character may be studied.

Such is M. Cousin's celebrated theory of nations, and the still more celebrated doctrine of war which he deduced from it. Both seem to me very inadequate, very false. As to the nature of nations, the important preliminary investigation as to what a nation is not, is altogether omitted; and (partly in consequence thereof) there is no investigation into, or description of, the conditions and characteristics of national existence. M. Cousin, simply for an *a priori* dogmatic reason, differentiates nations by their supposed final causes, the purposes for which he imagines them to have received existence, telling us that there are different nations because there are different ideas; that each nation represents one idea and not another; and that that idea represents for that nation the whole truth. This kind of thought is essentially anti-scientific. It proceeds upon an obviously illegitimate use of the principle of final causes. Besides, it is no excellence in a nation to be dominated by a single idea, and no nation seems to have been meant to realise only a single idea. A monomaniac nation must be far more than a monomaniac man. Instead of the apprehension of one idea and the application of one idea being that for which nations exist, it is the very thing they need to be most on their guard against. They are all prone to be one-idea'd and one-sided. The characters which the circumstances, physical and historical, in which nations are placed in the earlier stages of their existence tend to form are narrow and defective characters, their ends very definite and distinctive, but also very low and selfish ends; and nations have only to isolate themselves from one another, and yield each to its own exclusive tendencies, and concentrate itself on its favourite aim and private good, and they will undoubtedly soon represent and realise only one idea. But this is just what nations should not do. It was because the nations of antiquity thus isolated and narrowed themselves, that they ceased to serve an end in the world and passed away. It is because such isolation is not to anything like the same extent the law, or such selfishness the motive principle, of modern nations, that we see reasons of hope that they may never cease to promote noble ends and never require to pass away. One-idea'dness, one-sidedness, is shown most explicitly by all history to be full of danger; a thing

which nations ought to strive strenuously to be delivered from, and in working against which they are certainly not resisting the providential law which rules over their destinies.

The doctrine of war which M. Cousin has appended to his theory of nations was borrowed by him from Hegel. It is precisely the teaching of the most worthless of the old Greek sophists, that nature's right is might, and justice the advantage of the stronger.

War, according to M. Cousin, is the violent concussion of the particular ideas of different nations, and is caused by nations regarding their particular ideas as complete truths, instead of what they really are—incomplete truths. This account of the origin of war is scarcely plausible, and not at all accurate. Try to apply it, and its inadequacy immediately becomes obvious. M. Cousin did not venture to make the attempt. Had it been true, he would have been able to point out what were the particular ideas of different nations living in the same epoch, and how these ideas were what made these nations rush violently against each other; what particular apprehensions of the relation of the infinite to finite, for example, have been peculiar to England, France, and Germany, and how they have made them fight so much with one another, and with so many other nations. He was not able, because it was not true; because it has not been the particular ideas of different nations, nor even the particular characters of different nations, which have made them go to war, but certain evil passions common to all nations, common to all men. That the French nation has one character and represents one idea, and the German nation has another character and represents another idea, no more accounts for the wars they have waged against each other, than that men have another character and represent another idea than women, necessitates war between men and women. The true causes of war are those so well described by Hobbes,—competition, distrust, and glory—or, in other terms, greed, jealousy, and ambition, making men invade for gain, for safety, and for reputation. They are those indicated by St James: "From whence come wars and fightings among you? Come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?"

The primary cause of war is never anything so excellent as even imperfect truth, is never even the humblest form of good, but always evil, some evil lust. War is murder on a gigantic scale; and the true sources of it are those selfish and hateful passions of avarice, envy, ambition, and pride, out of which murder issues. This is not to say that war either can or ought always to be avoided. On the contrary; evil should be opposed, despotisms overthrown, mutinies quelled, invasions driven back, the oppressed liberated, might violating right punished by the sword if nothing else will do—by the sword, taken up as a last sad necessity, to be cast down with joy as soon as its harsh work is over. But although men, although nations, may have

to go to war for the sake of truth, justice, or mercy, it is never these things that are the real causes of war, but their opposites—the evil lusts which have produced their opposites, those wrongs that must be righted. It follows that those who argue that war is just because it is necessary, reason badly. Strictly or philosophically speaking, war is not necessary any more than injustice is necessary. Popularly speaking, or as a matter of fact, it is necessary, but only because of the existence of injustice. It is not necessary in any sense incompatible with injustice on both sides, and is only necessary in a sense which involves injustice on one side.

The notion that the inevitable result of war is the triumph of truth—that civilisation gains by every battle—is simply the revival and extension of the medieval superstition which originated the judicial duel. People in that age ignorantly supposed that if the justice of heaven were thus directly appealed to, it would infallibly declare itself in the vindication of the innocent and punishment of the guilty. There is no more reason for believing that in a duel of nations the one which has most truth and justice on its side will conquer, than that in a duel of persons the good man will overcome the bad. Since wicked Cain killed righteous Abel, history has supplied unbroken testimony to the possibility of the innocent suffering, even to the loss of life. The Romans succeeded less easily in their just than in their unjust wars, sustaining many serious defeats in the former and very few in the latter. No amount of truth or justice could have prevented Poland from being partitioned or Denmark from being despoiled.

So far from civilisation gaining by every battle, a main cause of numerous tribes of men being still uncivilised has been their constant warring against one another. Civilisation surely suffered from the wars which laid Italy beneath the feet of Spanish, French, and German invaders. Was Germany the better of the Thirty Years' War? Did the victories of Napoleon contribute greatly to spread the truths of the Revolution, or truth of any kind? Has his influence not been on the whole baneful, and especially so to France? Further, although every war may have been followed by some good, and many wars by much good, that good may have been only seldom, and in a small degree, the direct or proper effect of the antecedent war. And, in fact, the only good which can directly and truly result from war is the redress of some wrong, the punishment of some injustice. All other advantages—all that really does much for civilisation—must follow, not from war itself, but from things associated with it; so that war is not the cause but the occasion thereof—an evil overruled to produce good, as any evil, whether pain or sin, may be overruled to do. Thus the greater part of the good which can be shown to have some connection with war cannot be shown to have any causal connection with it, says nothing for the goodness of war, and is no

justification of the men who engage in it, although it may testify to the wisdom and goodness of Providence.

The argument that war is always just, because the party which is defeated always deserves to lose, and the party which conquers to gain, is fallacious. There is no truth in the assumptions on which it rests—that a nation which cannot defend its existence must needs be corrupt, degraded, unworthy to exist, and that a nation must be superior in virtue to every neighbour which it can conquer in war. Virtue does not necessarily tend to victory, or vice to defeat. Honesty may stand in the way of a nation's seizing wealth and power. Many nations have grown strong by deceit, by violence, by abominable means. The man who knows the histories of Rome, of France, of England, of Prussia, and yet denies this, must be wanting in clearness of moral vision. It is not merely foresight and self-denial which will help a nation to become a great military power: revenge and greed, a servile spirit in its masses, and ambition and lust of rule in its nobles, will help also. I deny not that justice will carry it over injustice in the end, the good cause triumphing in some future age, although perhaps a very distant one, and the good man in a better world; I deny not that there are in virtue higher possibilities even for war than in vice;—but more than this I do deny, and especially that the conquerors in war are necessarily more meritorious than the conquered.

In the tenth lecture M. Cousin theorises on great men, and reaches the following results: First, The great man is not an arbitrary or contingent existence—not a creature which may or may not be—but the representative, more or less accomplished, which every great nation necessarily produces. Second, The great man, like everything truly sublime and beautiful, combines universality with individuality. He represents the general spirit of his nation and times,—this is the stuff of which he is made, what unites him with all, and enables him to influence and dominate all; but he represents it under the finite and particular form of his own person or individuality; so that the particular and the general, the original and the ordinary, the finite and the infinite, mingle in him in that measure and harmony which is true human greatness. Third, Great men so sum up nations, epochs, and humanity, that universal history is but their united biographies. Fourth, The great man comes to represent an idea so long as it has force and is worth the representing — not before and not after; is born and dies at the proper time; and feels himself more or less the instrument of

a power which is not his own, of an irresistible force, of destiny. Fifth, The sign of a great man is great success; and from great success results first great power, and next great glory—things which are never awarded to those who have not merited them. Sixth, A great man is great, and he is a man. What makes him great is his relation to the spirit of his times and to his people; and this alone properly belongs to history, which is bound to pass over what is merely individual and temporary, and to attach itself to what is great and permanent, what has made a man historical, and given him power and glory. What makes him a man is his individuality; and this may be small, vicious, almost contemptible, but should be abandoned to biography. Seventh, The epoch of the infinite, where the absolute reigned to the suppression of individuality and liberty, was unfavourable to the development of great men; the epoch of the finite so especially favourable, that it may be called the heroic age of humanity; and the epoch of the relation of the finite with the infinite produces them in equal abundance, but less distinct and brilliant. Eighth, and last, Industry is the sphere of life least favourable to the manifestation of great men; war and philosophy are the spheres most favourable: because the two chief modes of serving humanity are, to cause it to advance a step in the path of truth, by elevating the ideas of an age to their highest expression, or by impressing these ideas on the world by the sword, and by making for them extensive conquests.

I have compressed a very able, very eloquent lecture into these eight propositions, in order to be able to indicate in the briefest possible way how far the theory therein contained seems to need correction. Proposition the first, then, may be true, but it has not been proved true. It might be proved true in two ways, and only two,—viz., by showing that *all* existence is necessary—or, in other words, that there is no such thing as contingency or freedom; or by discovering some necessary law which determines the appearance and disappearance of great men. M. Cousin does neither, and no one, in fact, has yet succeeded in either. Necessitarianism has still libertarianism strong and defiant in front of it. The necessary law of the coming and going of great men, if there be such a law, is still to seek; and no step even has been taken which promises to lead to the finding of it. Was there any other law for the birth of Luther than for those of his father and mother, the miner of Mohra and his

wife? Who can tell why a great man has been born here and not elsewhere, at one moment of time and no other? Why one generation has been favoured with a crowd of great men, and other generations refused one in seasons of greatest need? In every great nation great men have been produced; but that the great nations have necessarily produced them is what our profound ignorance of the conditions of their production should prevent us from asserting.

The second proposition may be regarded as M. Cousin's definition of the nature of the great man. It contains most important truth; above all, it gives due prominence to this truth, that a man cannot be really great merely by some single aptitude or ability, by what is isolating and distinctive, but by greatness of nature as a whole, greatness of mind, greatness of heart, so that the roots of his being strike deeper and wider into the life of his nation and time and humanity itself, than those of other men. But it does not express truth only: on the contrary, it is a serious error to represent generality and individuality as two things which are combined or mingled in the great man; to maintain that he is great by the one and a man by the other; and so to separate the greatness from the man and the man from the greatness. The greatness of the great man is not an element, but a predicate of him—a predicate of him as a man, an individual, a whole human being.

I regard the third proposition, which will be recognised as the expression of almost the entire positive substance of Mr Carlyle's philosophy of history, as in the main untrue. There is the valuable truth in it, that general causes, as they are called, are not omnipotent, not independent of individual intelligences and wills, or irresistible over them; that these latter have spheres of action of their own, and when powerful, wide spheres of action. But everything more which it contains is exaggeration and error. The greatest man's work is but an addition to the sum of work done by his fellow-men, and in no respect the sum itself. Great men are in no special way representative men—nay, the completest representative men are invariably mediocre men. The great man depends on others just as they depend on him; improves and develops what others have done, and leaves his own work to be in the same way improved and developed by others. Newton was perhaps the greatest man who has appeared in the history of mathematical and physical science; and it may be, as Mr Mills thinks, "that if Newton had not lived, the world must have waited for the Newtonian philosophy until there had been another Newton or his equivalent;" but a long succession of far lesser men have followed him and added to what he did, as a long series of labourers preceded him whose results made his possible. It is by no means so certain that some succession or combination of eminent men might not in the lifetime of the first or second generation after Newton have found out the law of gravitation

without his help, as it is that Newton himself, with the whole thought and theory of his great discovery in his head, had to wait for sixteen years, unable to accomplish its proof, till Picard, by correctly measuring an arc of the meridian, gave him the true length of the earth's radius, a necessary element in his reasoning. I readily grant, however, that a great man may accomplish what no combination of lesser men, not even the united efforts of the whole human race besides, can effect; but then, on the other hand, a small combination of men far from great, may equally be able to accomplish what he cannot. The work which an age has given it to do may only be achievable under the guidance of a great man; and yet more work may be allotted to be done, and actually be done, by an age of merely ordinary men. The age of Voltaire was not an age of great men, but it accomplished work both for good and evil, in a measure equalled by few other ages in the world's history. In a word, those who vindicate for great men a place, and even a large place, in history, defend the interests of truth; but those who represent history as only their united biographies or the connected series of their actions, only resuscitate an old error which died and was buried long ago,—that narrow, superficial, and false notion which caused a justly forgotten race of authors to suppose the history of nations was merely the history of their kings and nobles.

The fourth proposition into which I have condensed M. Cousin's doctrine of great men asserts that they are born and die at the proper time, but no criterion is given of what is the proper time. It is, consequently, so far a vague unverified assertion. And when it adds that the great man is always more or less of a fatalist, it passes into positive error. Fatalism may be an article of a great man's creed, an element of his faith, but nevertheless is a weakness, and no sign of greatness. In so far as a man is possessed by a blind feeling of being an instrument of destiny, used by an irresistible force he knows not to what end, instead of being rationally conscious of having a mission to accomplish, a worthy work to do, he is a man whose claims to leadership ought to be distrusted. There have been two men in the present century who have demanded to be received as political Messiahs on this ground of being "men of destiny," Napoleon I. and Napoleon III., one of them undoubtedly a very great man, the other not an ordinary man; and have not both, like blind men leading the blind, led those who followed them into the ditch? Fortune, fate, one's star—belief in these things may have characterised Wallenstein, Napoleon, and many other great men as well as small; but certainly not all great men, and not the greatest of great men, the wisest and best among them.

The fifth proposition contains probably the most dangerous error of any in the whole theory, and, at the same time, truth enough to give it plausibility. A great man must certainly be a man who can

do great things; the greatness of his work, all hindrances duly taken into account, must be the truest sign of the greatness of his character. But success is another matter. The greatest man may be sent into the world either too soon or too late to succeed. "The noble army of the martyrs" has numbered in its ranks the wisest and bravest, the greatest and most heroic of our race. He who was the perfect type of greatness and the author of the greatest thing on earth, had no success in the sense meant, and founded His work on a death not of glory but of shame. "Give me an instance," says M. Cousin, "of unmerited glory;" as if times without number the cry of, "Not this man, but Barabbas," had not ascended from the earth, absolving the vile and criminal, and dooming to death the hero and the saint; and again, "whoever does not succeed is of no use in the world, leaves no great result, and passes away as if he had never been," as if there had not been many sad defeats worth far more than many brilliant triumphs, and as if the blood of a Polycarp and a Hus, an Arnold of Brescia and a Savonarola, and all the host of those who have died for faith, for science, for freedom, for country, had been shed in vain because shed for a good afar off, and not for that glory which our author tells us is "almost always contemporaneous with a great action, and never far distant from a great man's tomb." M. Cousin speaks in a higher and truer strain when he says, "We should despise reputation, the success of a day and the trifling means that lead to it. We should think of doing, doing much, doing well—of being, and not appearing; for it is an infallible rule, that all which appears without being, soon disappears; but all which exists, by virtue of its nature, sooner or later must appear." But this is not only inconsistent with the tenor of all that goes before it and follows after it in the lecture under consideration, but is still merely partially true, dubious, incapable of verification. Evil is no empty appearance, but a strong reality which can struggle with good on not unequal terms; which has conquered good almost or altogether as often as it has been conquered by it; and which equally with good has powers and laws by which it grows and spreads. There are lies and vices dating from the first man, which are as strong to-day as ever they were, as flourishing as anything to be seen in this world; and those who tell us they are unreal, mere appearances, which must soon vanish away, are confident as to the future only from having failed to look at the facts of the past and to study the powers of the present.

The sixth proposition rests on the error contained in M. Cousin's third proposition. There ought to be no such distinction admitted as that which it draws. The meannesses of great men cannot be so separated from their greatness: on the contrary, their every meanness is a deduction from their greatness; their vices are as historical as their virtues; some of them have been as great for evil as for good. The right of every man to be judged fairly, charitably, not

by single acts and features, and especially not by single facts and failures, but by his character and works in their entirety, is enough for the greatest man. And those who like Hegel, like Carlyle, like Cousin, claim for the great man more than this,—as that he shall be judged by another standard than his fellow-men, that his greatness shall be counted goodness, that his strength shall be held to be its own law, that his sins against humanity shall be blotted out from the page of history and only what redounds to his glory recorded, and the like,—simply advise us to falsify history, to delude ourselves, and to set up idols and worship them. When, going farther, they sneer at those who reject their advice as "small critics," or "psychological pedagogues," or "valet-souls, incapable of recognising the worth of a hero," they show a foolish contempt for reason and conscience, and a foolish respect for what is precisely the valet's creed,—that belief in power and consequent disbelief in the primacy of right which make mean and ignoble souls. By such a creed no man ever has been, or ever will be, helped to be heroic.

The seventh proposition involved in M. Cousin's theory must be discarded with the division of the course of history on which it depends. Even the so-called epoch of the infinite produced many great men. The founders of all the great religions belonged to it; and they have influenced humanity not less than either philosophers or conquerors. But the East had also philosophers who thought out profound systems of speculation, and conquerors who created and destroyed vast empires. Egypt and Assyria must have had many men of genius in the spheres of art and industry. The authors of the Book of Job and of the Ramayana must be allowed to rank high among the world's great poets.

The last proposition suggests a question which M. Cousin should not have overlooked: Is there any standard by which we can compare the great men of different spheres of life, the poet and the mechanical inventor, the founder of a religion and the conqueror, the painter or musician, and the mathematician or philosopher,—and if so, what is it? How are we to measure the relative magnitudes of Aristotle, Cæsar, Raffaelle, Luther, Shakespeare, and Newton? Individual preference is obviously worth little, as each individual is more able to appreciate some excellences than others, and, by constitution and habits, prone to overestimate certain merits and to underestimate others. Popular opinion is obviously worth little more, based as it invariably is on a superficial acquaintance with facts. And even were both far more reliable than they are, it could only be through their conforming to a standard, a real or objective rule of measurement. Till this is discovered, therefore,—and it is not likely to be easily discovered,—all discussion as to which sphere of life has been adorned with the greatest men must be fruitless, and all decisions in favour of one over another arbitrary and premature.

II.

M. Theodore Jouffroy (1796 - 1842) shared many of M. Cousin's ideas, without detriment to his own independence, originality, and ingenuity as a thinker. He could not rival Cousin in producing broad general effects, but he had greater influence on a select class. He was almost as remarkable as a literary artist, while his style was characteristically different. He was much more interested in psychology, and less in general metaphysics; indeed, for him philosophy was the science of man, and its chief problem was to determine the destiny of man. Cousin was enthusiastic in seeking and setting forth the truth, but apt to be much too easily convinced that he had got it, and to proclaim his views with a confidence and unqualifiedness more consonant to an oratorical than a philosophical temperament. Jouffroy was an unresting and indefatigable inquirer, distrustful of himself, and prone to doubt. His early beliefs had failed him, and he was not inclined to adopt others without a thorough sifting. At the same time he was a naturally pious, earnest, and truthful soul. Hence his short and sad, yet beautiful and useful, life, was mainly a pathetic struggle to overcome his own intellectual scepticism.[1]

He repeatedly touched the subject of historical philosophy with all his natural superiority of thought and style. In the first series of his 'Mélanges philosophiques' (1833) he has brought together, under the heading of 'Philosophie de l'histoire,' the following essays, which had for the most part appeared in the 'Globe' from 1825 to 1827: 1. How dogmas come to an end; 2. The Sorbonne and the philosophers; 3. Reflections on the philosophy of history; 4. Bossuet, Vico, and Herder; 5. The part of Greece in the development of humanity; 6. The present state of humanity. All these essays are attractive and suggestive reading; but only the third and sixth are of a sufficiently general nature to warrant our giving an account of them.

[1] On Jouffroy may be consulted, Mignet, 'Éloges historiques'; Ad. Garnier in Franck's 'Dict. d. Sc. phil.'; Taine, 'Philosophes français'; Ferraz, 'Spiritualisme et libéralisme'; and Caro, 'Philosophie et philosophes.'

Here is a summary of the Reflections: The great difference between man and the other animals is, that while their condition remains from age to age the same, his is continually changing. History is the record of these changes, and the philosophy of history is the investigation of their cause and law. Now human mobility cannot have its principle in the outward world, which acts on the brutes not less than on man, and besides, changes not; nor in the animal instincts and passions, which are the same in all lands and ages; but in that which is essentially changeable in the constitution of man—the ideas of his intelligence. The changes which take place among ideas originate all other changes which take place in the condition of man; or, in other words, all the changes of history; so that the sole object of history is to trace the development of human intelligence, as it is manifested by the outward changes which it at different epochs produces. But as ideas, which are invisible, can only be inferred from facts which are visible, history, to accomplish its single aim, must solve these three problems: 1°, What has been the visible form of humanity from the beginning to the present time? 2°, What has been the development of the ideas of humanity from the beginning to the present time? and, 3°, How these two developments have corresponded—how the development of ideas has produced the development of the visible form of humanity from the beginning to the present time.

The majority of historians have confined their attention to the facts, and frequently to the least important classes of facts. The authors who introduced the history of manners and institutions into general history accomplished a revolution, but did not, as was at first supposed, get at the root of the matter, the cause of these causes being now seen to be the succession of ideas. A time may be anticipated when this also will be regarded as a secondary and subordinate cause, and valued chiefly as leading to the discovery of the fixed and immutable law of the succession. That reached, history will lose its independent existence, and be resolved into science; but the day is obviously distant, since even the events, institutions, religions, and manners of different epochs and countries are imperfectly known, and their immediate cause—the succession of ideas—

far more imperfectly still. To ascertain the development of ideas is, and will long be, the grand desideratum.

In the individual, in society, and in humanity, there is a twofold movement of intelligence; the natural or spontaneous, and the voluntary or reflective; the former regulative of common thought, and the latter of philosophical thought. The reflective movement is always in advance of the spontaneous movement, the few who deliberately seek truth necessarily finding it sooner than the many who do not. Both movements proceed towards the same end and in obedience to the same law, but differing in velocity, and yet acting on each other, the more rapid accelerating the slower, and the slower retarding the more rapid; so that the velocity of the development of humanity is the resultant of the unequal velocities of these two movements. This combination of movements in the generation and succession of ideas, and in the transformation of ideas into laws, institutions, and manners, is a beneficent necessity, since, if the movement of the masses retards that of the philosophers, it also renders it more certain and fruitful, prevents mistakes, and secures correctness.

The great question whether the movement of humanity is necessary or not, can only be determined by a consideration of the two elements or principles which enter into the production of all human events—the passions of human nature and the ideas of human intelligence. If reason always ruled in an individual we could foresee his conduct; that we so often cannot foresee it is because we cannot divine how far he will listen to passion, and because passion is so variable and capricious in its working that its movements cannot be calculated. Passion has, however, less influence, and reason more, on the conduct of peoples than of individuals. The passions of individuals in a community neutralise one another by their opposition; and so leave the general ideas, on which all are agreed, to rule with comparatively little resistance. Hence the conduct of peoples is far more conformed to their ideas than the conduct of individuals, and can be far more easily foreseen. Hence, also, the ease and accuracy with which the conduct of nations can be calculated are in proportion to their freedom and self-government, since the greater the influence of public opinion in a

nation, and the less the direction of the nation depends on the will of certain individuals, the greater is the ascendancy of ideas, which conform to law and logic, and the less the ascendancy of the passions, which contravene law and are contrary to logic. "But, in every case, the influence of individual passions can reach only events of a secondary and transient importance. Great events are always beyond it; for nothing great, nothing permanent, can ever be produced among a people, whatever be its government, except by the force and with the support of the convictions of that people. All that the passions of individuals can attempt and accomplish in opposition to these convictions is speedily swept away. No despot, no favourite, no man of genius, may neglect these convictions in his enterprises and institutions; nay, more, no one can be a successful despot or a great statesman except by obeying them. In fine, passion acts only on the surface of the history of nations, while the foundation is in ideas." It is unwarrantable, then, to explain everything in history by the inevitable development of ideas, as some moderns do; but it is still more unwarrantable to explain everything by individual characters and passions, like the ancients. The truth lies between these two extremes.

The passions of individuals, however, really exerted a greater power in ancient than they do in modern times. The necessary progress of intelligence is what Bossuet called Providence, and what others call destiny, or the force of things. Bossuet's word is good, but not in the sense of an actual interposition of God, who acts with regard to humanity, no less than with regard to the heavenly bodies, through fixed and certain laws, although He acts differently, since the laws which determine the development of humanity presuppose reason and liberty, and operate through them.

Further, the movement of humanity is not in a circle, like that of the stars, but progressive. The sentiments of an age as to the Good, Beautiful, and True, are expressed with greatest vividness by the poets. True poets are always the children of their age. It is the mission of philosophers to comprehend their age, to advance before it, and to prepare the future; and a few of them have risen to so lofty a point of view, and seen

so much of the course to be traversed by man through time, as to have become intelligible only after ages of progress.

As a work of art, M. Jouffroy's essay is almost perfect. And the thoughts which it conveys are, on the whole, both true and important, well worthy of the beautiful expression which they have received. At the same time, they are too general, and, so to speak, external, to constitute a philosophy of history. They are simply what they profess to be—" reflections on the philosophy of history," —nothing more.

Regarded as such, there is only one point to which we feel compelled to take decided objection. M. Jouffroy adopted M. Cousin's division of intelligence into spontaneous and reflective, without improvement or modification; and hence what has been said on this subject with respect to M. Cousin is equally applicable with respect to M. Jouffroy. The two sections of his essay which he devotes to the exposition of the distinction are confused and inaccurate. All that he says of spontaneous intelligence proceeds on the absurd and self-contradictory supposition of its being " blind and involuntary." Almost all that he says of reflective intelligence is true only if it be no separate mode of intelligence, as it is described to be, but only an extension of spontaneous intelligence. Thus M. Jouffroy insists that reflective intelligence is always in advance of spontaneous intelligence in the discovery of truth; whereas, in the only sense in which reflection can be with any propriety described as a distinct mode of thought, it never is, and never can be, in advance of spontaneous thought, since that thought is its object.

On another point M. Jouffroy has expressed himself too absolutely. It is a very important truth, when properly understood, that the principle of the mobility of human things is in the mobility of the ideas of human intelligence; but an adequate comprehension of it will lead us to guard and qualify it, and not to affirm, with M. Jouffroy, that the whole of history is, in the last analysis, only the history of ideas. Feelings presuppose ideas—they cannot operate without ideas; it does not follow that they have no real existence, that they can be resolved into ideas, or even that they are less powerful factors of history than ideas. The development of intelligence is of primary importance in the philosophical study of history, not because intelligence is the only, or even the most powerful, element in history, but because it holds such a position in the human mind that all other principles are dependent on it, and can only be studied as dependent on it. The dependence of the emotional principles of human nature on the intellectual, however, is not due to their inferior power, but to the character of their power—the need which they have, owing to their blindness as mere impulses, of the enlightenment and guidance which intellect alone can supply.

The title, 'De l'état actuel de l'humanité,' is an inadequate and inaccurate designation for an essay which is, in reality, an attempt to forecast the future of our race. The author glances over the world of humanity, and sees it divided into two very unequal portions, barbarous tribes and civilised nations. History, he thinks, warrants him at once to conclude that the former are destined to become civilised; and he asks, Will this be through a new system of civilisation, arising from the bosom of barbarism, or through the triumph of the already existing systems of civilisation over barbarism? He finds in the progressive advance of our present civilisation—the gradual diminution of barbarism — the relatively small number of savages—their division into feeble and unconnected portions—and the neighbourhood and pressure of civilised peoples, more powerful and active,—so many obvious proofs that the number of systems of civilisation is finally settled; and that it is the destiny of the savage portion of humanity to be amalgamated with the civilised masses already formed.

He surveys these masses and discovers that they fall into three groups, or belong to three different systems of civilisation, based on three different religions or philosophies, the Christian, the Mohammedan, and the Brahminic. The radical difference between savages and civilised nations is that the former have only crude and vague ideas on the great questions which interest humanity, while the latter have complete and coherent religions, which involve not only a certain mode of worship, but an entire system of civilisation, bearing to the religion the relation of effect to cause. M. Jouffroy then compares the three systems, and finds that Christianity alone is at present endowed with expansive life,—with the twofold zeal of improvement and proselytism; that while the Christian system is making progress, and the nations which compose it are daily becoming more united and powerful, Mohammedanism and Brahminism make no conquests, resist the invasion of Christianity chiefly by their inertia, sap the strength of the nations which receive them, and, in a word, manifest all the symptoms of decay. Hence, he concludes that, if the Christian system of civilisation be not destroyed by internal defects, it will gain possession of the world,—that its future involves the future of the world.

Then, looking more closely at the movement of Christian civilisation, he seems to himself to see that it is led by three nations, France, England, and Germany; all other nations imitating what is already realised in these, while they, although finding much to imitate in each other, have yet in certain respects reached a height from which they can make further advances only by invention. Each of these nations has a special faculty in which it excels, each has its peculiar employment in the work of civilisation, but the distribution of their gifts is for the good of the world, their labours tend towards a common and beneficent end, and there exists between them an involuntary alliance, truly majestic and holy, having for object the progress of humanity. Germany is the learned nation, distinguished by patience of intellect, accumulating with a laborious curiosity and prodigious memory all the facts of history and science, and thus supplying the raw materials of ideas. France is the philosophical nation, distinguished by clearness of understanding, by the power of drawing from facts what is general and suitable in them with accuracy, order, and acumen,—in a word, of forming ideas into shape and rendering them popular. England is the practical nation, distinguished by public spirit, industry, and the excellence of her institutions, and having for task the application of ideas to the concerns of life. The true statesman in each of these nations should look beyond the good of his own country, the worn-out end of its aggrandisement and the abasement of its neighbours, to the advantage of the union of Europe, and of the civilisation of the world by the union and the ideas of Europe. "The politics of our day should look not to the balance of Europe, but to the future of humanity. The civil wars of Europe are ended; the rivalship of the peoples which compose it is about to cease, as the rivalship of the cities of Greece ceased under the sway of Alexander, as the diversities of the provinces of France disappeared under the unity of the monarchy."

It would be most unreasonable to object to the speculations of which a summary has now been given that they are merely general; that they involve no conclusions as to particular contingencies, no predictions of particular occurrences. In carefully refraining from all such, M. Jouffroy has shown his wisdom, his knowledge of the

limits within which historical prevision is possible. The science of history, whatever it may in the future become, is as yet very far from being an exact science like astronomy. It furnishes us with no means of calculating the courses of nations with precision and definiteness like the courses of the stars; of foretelling that at this or that period of future time a nation will do this or that action, as we can foretell that at a certain date a star will arrive at a certain point. To forecast, through reasoning on the general tendencies of nations, the general character and direction of their future movements, is the utmost that can be accomplished, and even this cannot be done without difficulty, and without considerable probability of error. Perhaps M. Jouffroy, notwithstanding the caution of procedure which has been noted, and his exceptional clearness and penetration of intellect, has not entirely escaped error.

The inference that what remains of barbarism cannot give rise to any great and independent religion or philosophy, nor, consequently, to any great and independent civilisation, appears irrefragable. The inference that the Christian system is—even looking exclusively to historical considerations — incomparably superior to the Brahminical and Mohammedan systems in all the elements of life and power, and must conquer and destroy them if the struggle be sufficiently prolonged, appears equally obvious and certain, although the number of adherents of Brahminism and the extent and possibilities of Mohammedan proselytism may have been understated. But it is not legitimate to identify, as M. Jouffroy has virtually done, the conditional conclusion that the Christian system will gain possession of the world if not destroyed by internal defects, with the positive and unconditional conclusion that the Christian system will gain possession of the world. The former conclusion is alone proved by M. Jouffroy, and because it is proved the latter is falsely supposed to be proved. In order to reach the latter conclusion—in order to make out the probability of the Christian system destroying every other and becoming universal—it was incumbent on our author to show that the hypothesis contained in the former conclusion might be rejected; that there was no probability of the Christian system perishing through internal defects. The neglect to attempt this was a serious omission. It is precisely at this point that all European thinkers who doubt or deny that the future will belong to Christianity diverge and differ from those who believe and affirm it. They do not imagine that the Christian system will be overcome by Mohammedanism or Brahminism; but they pretend that it is a combination of truth and error, that it has defects as well as merits, and must eventually give place to a more complete and determinate system of solutions to the problems which interest humanity. They look especially to science, which has in recent times made such wonderful and rapid progress in so many directions, to bring forth a general

doctrine capable of supplying all the wants and guiding all the activities of man in a more satisfactory way than any religion. The aim of M. Jouffroy's argument required him to prove such hope an illusion, and to convict those who indulge in it of turning away from the highest and most comprehensive truth to one lower and narrower, from the ultimate and complete to a derivative and partial good. This requirement he has failed to fulfil,—has failed even to see that it existed.

Dissent must further be expressed from that portion of M. Jouffroy's speculations which concern the relation of England, France, and Germany to humanity and its future. Although his views on this subject are the reflections of a just and generous nature, include some important truths, and are very generally entertained, they are, as a whole, not true; and it is most undesirable that they should longer continue to be received so implicitly and widely as they are. That England, France, and Germany are, if all things be taken into account, at the head of European civilisation, is doubtless true; and that each excels the other two in some respects, and is inferior in others, is likewise true: but there is a wide interval between the first of these truths and the assumption that the nations mentioned will retain in the future the same rank relatively either to each other or to other nations which they occupy at present; and a wide interval also between the second truth and the assumption that their excellences and defects are due to the presence or absence of special faculties which mark out for them their proper and peculiar employment in the work of human progress.

What guarantee is there that England, France, and Germany will long retain their present relative positions? What certainty is there for any one of them, that a hundred years hence it will be in the first rank of nations? What probability is there that no other nation will have reached an equal height? Italy, so far behind them when M. Jouffroy wrote, is already nearly on a line with them, being probably, of all the nations of Europe, that which has made, in the present generation, the greatest progress of a truly satisfactory kind; and this in the main, not through following or imitating any foreign state, but by advancing along a path of her own, by the development of her own proper life. We have but to recall the names of Manzoni, Pellico, Niccolini, Giusti, and Balbo, of Rosmini, Gioberti, and Mamiani, of Cavour and D'Azeglio, of Manin, Mazzini, and Garibaldi, and of the other noble men whom Italy has produced during the present century with such wonderful profusion, to convince ourselves that she has been for more than a generation, in one respect at least, first among the nations—viz., in the intensity of her desire to impress the image of her own national individuality alike on her philosophical speculations, her works of art and literature, and her political action. And why should Italy not advance as far on

her way as England, France, or Germany on theirs? For peace and war, for adventure by land and sea, for science and art, prose and poetry, political subtlety, religious fervour, and heroic self-sacrifice, the Italian genius is inferior to no other in Europe. Further, there are two nations which in strength are perhaps even at present equal to those which M. Jouffroy described as bearing with them the whole race of mankind; which are growing more rapidly than they; which are so situated as to be safer than the safest of them from permanent conquest; and which appear to be far more distant from their natural limits of increase. The possibilities before the United States and Russia are so grand that no mortal has a right to deny that the time may come when the mightiest power by sea at present will be doomed to stand before the one, and the mightiest on land before the other, like Hector before Achilles, able only in presence of the stronger and more heaven-favoured foe to resolve, "not inglorious at least shall I perish, but after doing some great thing that may be spoken of in ages to come."

> "Μὴ μὰν ἀσπουδεί γε καὶ ἀκλειῶς ἀπολοίμην,
> Ἀλλα μέγα ῥέξας τι καὶ ἐσσομένοισι πυθέσθαι."

To speak of the distinctive merits of nations as due to the operation of special faculties, also appears erroneous and misleading. Literally and strictly understood, indeed, it is so obviously absurd as to be indefensible, since every man of sane mind has the same faculties as every other. In order to get from it a credible meaning, we must understand by faculty merely an aptitude resulting from the circumstances in which a people has been placed, a facility of thought or action which has required time, long or short, to form. To affirm that a nation has a special faculty in this sense, is not only to make a loose and confused application of language, but to state what, if true, obviously both demands and admits of explanation instead of being itself the sufficient explanation of anything, since such a faculty is an effect, may be even of recent origin, or capable of being easily acquired. To attribute to a nation a special faculty in any other sense, has no warrant either in reason or facts. Undoubtedly there is more learning in Germany than in France or England: but the causes plainly are not special faculties for learning granted to Germans and denied to Frenchmen and Englishmen, or even the same faculties in any exceptional measure, quicker apprehensions, more capacious memories, greater love of knowledge for its own sake, more patience of intellect or more energy of will; but the superiority of the arrangements and institutions in that country for the promotion of secondary and higher education, the monopoly of all military and political power by the nobility, the comparatively small dimensions of German trade until quite recently, and other general social circumstances which concur either in drawing or

driving the *élite* of the middle and lower classes in Germany into some department of learning as the most accessible and promising sphere of ambition, whereas in France and England the most varied and powerful influences combine to attract them elsewhere. While the best minds among the youth of Germany are permanently gained to the service of science by being drawn into the professoriate of its numerous local and rival universities, similar minds are in France drawn, as by the suction of a maelstrom, into the vortex of Parisian society, and there lost to learning through absorption in financial speculation, political intrigue, journalistic ambitions, and all the caprices, aims, disappointments, and successes of a fleeting and feverish day. But the juristical school of Cujas, the philosophical school of Descartes, the French Benedictines, the French mathematicians and physicists who adorned with such profusion the earlier part of the present century; and, in a word, persons and works without number, have conclusively proved that Frenchmen are not necessarily, or in virtue of any essential characteristics of their nature, either less profound or less industrious, less original or less persevering, than Germans. Similarly, there is no conclusive evidence that the English genius is in itself either less scientific and philosophical or more worldly-wise and practical than the German.

Had M. Jouffroy lived to the present day, it is most improbable that he would repeat either that civil wars were ended, or that the wars of the peoples were about to cease. We, who have so recently seen civil war in America, France, and Spain, will not venture to say it may not be seen again even in England or Germany. And the peoples are arming and preparing for war in a way which can scarcely fail to be followed by an enormous effusion of human blood.

III.

The eclectic philosophy had its counterpart, or rather complement, in doctrinaire politics. What the one was in speculation, the other was in action. The former, regarding all antecedent philosophies, sensualistic, idealistic, sceptical, and mystical, as composed of truth and error, as never wholly false but only incomplete, sought to separate what was true in each from what was false, and so to combine the truths thus obtained as to produce a complete philosophy, a complete expression of consciousness and reality. The latter, in precisely the same way, treated all antecedent political theories, monarchical, aristocratical, and democratical, as right in themselves, but wrong in relation to

other theories,—wrong in their exclusiveness; and attempted, by selection, by compromise, and by combination, to do justice to *all* the forces of society, and to secure their complete representation and their harmonious development. They may thus be almost considered as the two sides of one system, or as different applications of the same principles. But as philosophy and politics, however closely connected, remain always very distinct departments of activity, and require very distinct and special talents for their successful cultivation, it was only natural that the chief representatives even of the eclectic philosophy and doctrinaire politics which flourished in France forty years ago, should not have been the same persons; that MM. Cousin and Jouffroy should have attained eminence as philosophers, and M. Guizot and the Duc de Broglie as politicians.

Yet M. Guizot was drawn as directly and strongly to historical research and meditation by his political convictions and sentiments as M. Cousin by his philosophical principles and aims. He felt himself compelled to seek in the past a vindication of the legitimacy of the various forces which had ruled society, and a proof of the various articles of the political creed which he believed ought to regulate the conduct of statesmen in the present and future; just as M. Cousin felt himself compelled to seek in it the truths contained in previous philosophies, in order to compose a philosophy which would be final because complete. The result was in both cases most favourable to historical inquiry and speculation. Indeed, eclecticism did more for the history of philosophy than for philosophy itself, and doctrinairism more for political history than for political science. As the philosophical speculations of M. Cousin, although brilliant, are wanting in thoroughness and logical severity, so the political disquisitions of M. Guizot, notwithstanding their elevation of tone and breadth of thought, are almost always somewhat superficial. M. Cousin and M. Guizot both showed great skill in constructing a symmetrical and elegant system, the one of philosophy and the other of policy, and both failed to rest their systems firmly on sure foundations. Hence the eclecticism of the one and the doctrinairism of the other have suffered change and loss. The

impulse, however, which they gave to historical study still operates. In this connection no fair judge will deny them the heartiest gratitude and admiration.

The story of the life of Francis Guizot (1787-1874) is known to all educated men, for he lived long full in the world's eye, was not sparing of personal explanations and reminiscences, and had his character, words, and actions closely scrutinised from many points of view. His name recalls to us a most distinguished and influential career, a varied and indefatigable activity, important political services rendered when in opposition, great political ability displayed when in power, dignity and fortitude in the bearing of adversity, brilliant oratorical achievements, numerous literary works, some of which are of high intrinsic value, while all are admirable in aim, and the most rigid probity and propriety of personal conduct. It recalls also, unfortunately, other things and qualities—lamentable mistakes, serious inconsistencies, faults which were almost crimes. He was a man of powerful intellect, imperious will, pure and noble sentiments, strong and austere character, but he was deficient in practical political wisdom and tact, inventiveness and resourcefulness. After a perusal of his 'Memoirs' the deepest impression left is one of regret that a man so largely endowed with many of the gifts of the statesman should have been so incapable of seeing how to apply the truths which he could expound so well, and to distinguish what was comparatively insignificant in affairs from what was vital. Here, however, we only require to treat of him in that capacity in which he won his purest and highest distinctions, —in his character of philosophical historian.[1]

All the best qualities of M. Guizot's mind are seen to their fullest advantage in his historical works,—accuracy in investigation, thoroughness of scholarship, a laboriousness which leaves nothing necessary undone, comprehensiveness of view and moderation of judgment, insight into political causation, elevation of moral sentiment, religious reverence and conviction. He is not, however, strictly speaking, a great historian. He wants

[1] He has been studied in this aspect by Mr J. S. Mill, 'Discussions,' vol. i.; by Sir Archibald Alison, 'Essays,' vol. iii.; by M. Renouvier, 'La Critique Philosophique,' tom. i. and iii.; and by Ferraz.

the narrative and descriptive power, the pictorial and dramatic imagination, the interest for what is individual in characters or actions, without which no man can be a great historical artist. He is, however, what is still rarer and not less important, a great historical thinker or philosopher.

Perhaps we cannot fix more precisely what he is and what he is not, than by availing ourselves of the distinctions which he has himself drawn in the admirable estimate of Savigny's 'History of the Roman Law in the Middle Ages,' given in the eleventh lecture of the 'Cours de 1829':—

"Every epoch, every historical matter, may, so to speak, be considered in three different aspects, and imposes on the historian a threefold task. He can—nay, ought—first seek the facts themselves, collecting and bringing to light, without any other aim than exactitude, all that has happened. The facts once recovered, it is necessary to know what laws have governed them; how they were connected; what causes have brought about those incidents which are the life of society, and which propel it in certain paths towards certain ends. I wish to mark clearly and precisely the difference of the two studies. Facts, distinctively so called, outward and visible events, are the body of history — the members, bones, muscles, organs, material elements of the past; and the knowledge and description of them form what may be called *historical anatomy*. But for society, as for the individual, anatomy is not the only science. Facts not only exist, but are connected with one another; they succeed one another and are engendered by the action of certain forces, which operate under the empire of certain laws. There is, in a word, an organisation and life of societies as well as of individuals. This organisation has also its science, the science of the secret laws which preside over the course of events. This is the *physiology of history*. But neither historical physiology nor anatomy is complete and veritable history. You have enumerated the facts and traced the internal and general laws which produced them. Do you also know their external and living *physiognomy?* Have you before your eyes their individual and animate features? This is absolutely necessary, because these facts, now dead, once lived—the past has been the present; and unless it again become so to you, if the dead be not resuscitated, you know it not — you know not history. Could the anatomist and physiologist guess what man was if they had never seen him alive? The investigation of facts, the study of their organisation, the reproduction of their form and motion, these constitute what is truly history. And every great historical work, in order to be assigned its true position, should be examined and judged of in these relations."

When we examine the historical labours of M. Guizot himself from these three points of view, we find that he is certainly not seen to great advantage under the third. If we wish to know the external and living physiognomy of Merovingian and Carlovingian France—to have a truthful transcript of the individual features and incidents of medieval life—we must turn not to his pages but to those of M. Augustin Thierry or M. Michelet. As a work of art, his 'History of the English Revolution' is certainly cold and colourless if compared with what Mr Carlyle has written on the same theme. With a correct and dignified style, with an eloquence which never fails and sometimes rises high, he yet shows comparatively little of the power which reproduces the form and motion of history, its local hues, its poetical truth, its dramatic aspects, the feelings of the hour, the peculiarities of individuals. It is altogether different in the other two relations. M. Guizot is very great as an historical anatomist, and still greater as an historical physiologist. He may not, indeed, in the former respect, rank as high as a Savigny, but the reason obviously is not inferiority of ability, but merely want of the time and leisure which the Berlin professor enjoyed. He gives ample evidence of possessing in a most eminent degree all the faculties which are called into action in the ascertainment, criticism, distribution, and comparison of facts. Then, no one will say of him what he justly says of Savigny—viz., that he overlooked the internal concatenation of facts, the organisation and laws of the social movement. It is in laying bare that concatenation and the motive forces of the social organism that his merits are most conspicuous. He shows a singular faculty for apprehending the ideas which underlie facts, the inner changes which determine outer changes, for detecting the social and intellectual tendencies of an epoch, for tracing the operation of the larger and more lasting causes which chiefly influence human affairs, and yet which escape the ordinary historian's vision. In a word, he has not been surpassed as an historical physiologist, as a student of the general and progressive organisation of social facts.

The fame of M. Guizot as a philosophical historian rests chiefly on his 'Histoire générale de la civilisation en Europe,' and 'Histoire de la civilisation en France,' which consist of

lectures delivered at the Sorbonne in the years 1828, 1829, and 1830. The 'Essais sur l'histoire de France' (1st ed. 1823; 5th ed. 1841) is the substance of discourses delivered at an earlier period, and contains little which may not be found in a more elaborate form in those two works. Indeed, four of the six essays which it contains—viz., those on "The Origin and Establishment of the Franks in Gaul," "The Causes of the Fall of the Merovingians and Carlovingians," "The Social State and Political Institutions of France under the Merovingians and Carlovingians," and "The Political Character of the Feudal *Régime*"—are simply the first drafts, as it were, of the views which he afterwards expounded more perfectly in the Leçons.

The remaining two—the first and last essays in the volume—contain a little more of distinctive matter. In the former, "Concerning Municipal Government in the Roman Empire during the fifth century of the Christian Era," M. Guizot discusses a great problem which he has only touched on elsewhere, and which, as the translator and annotator of Gibbon's immortal work, he was specially prepared successfully to discuss. The problem was to explain the fall of the Roman empire. It had already occupied the minds of many thinkers, including a Montesquieu and Gibbon, and yet it received for the first time perhaps even an approximate solution from M. Guizot. His predecessors had merely treated of the general causes of Roman decadence in a general way, and had therefore merely talked round and round about the particular problem. They had referred the fall of the empire to the institution of slavery, to the despotism of the emperors, the decline of religious faith, luxury and moral corruption; and overlooked that, although all these things doubtless did indirectly contribute to the result, they must have done so only indirectly, since they were in full operation centuries before, when the empire was in all the glory of its strength. When Rome fell she was not more dependent on slave labour than when, under Scipio and Cæsar, her legions vanquished Hannibal and conquered Gaul; a religion infinitely superior to any she had ever had before, had won for itself general acceptance; and poverty prevented luxury from being nearly so widely spread as in former generations when the barbarians caused her no fear. It

was, accordingly, a distinct and decided step towards a solution, although certainly not a complete or exhaustive solution, when M. Guizot, leaving vague generalities, fixed attention on the circumstance that the empire was an agglomeration of towns held together by the central sovereign power, and showed how, by tracing Roman legislation regarding the *curiales*,—the class which managed municipal affairs, and not only paid all municipal expenses, but collected and were responsible for the revenue of the State—the landed but unprivileged class, the middle class, of Roman society,—they could be proved to have gradually sunk under their burdens, and at last to have disappeared. With their extinction the central authority had no longer resources; the legions could not be recruited with Roman men; the cities were unable to support one another or defend themselves; internal decay had ensured the success of external violence.

The last essay of the volume is on "The Causes of the Establishment of a Representative System in England." It describes and explains the characteristics which distinguish the political development of England from that of France; how the history of England antecedent to the Norman conquest, and the circumstances of that conquest, had for result an equality of strength between royalty, aristocracy, and the commons, unknown elsewhere; and how the simultaneous unfolding of these different social elements enabled England to attain a government at once orderly and free, earlier than any Continental nation, and called forth that political good sense, that spirit of political compromise, which has long been one of her most conspicuous qualities. Ever since Montesquieu and some of his contemporaries gave popularity to the study of English political institutions, the British Constitution, or at least what was supposed to be the British Constitution, has had admirers in France anxious to see it transplanted to their own country. The possibility and desirableness of such transplantation were fundamental articles of the doctrinaire creed adopted by M. Guizot. They explain his predilection for the study of English constitutional history, shown not only by his elaborate researches regarding the English Revolution, but by his having devoted early in his political and professorial career an entire course of

lectures to the development of the views contained in the essay just mentioned. I refer to the 'Cours de 1822 sur les origines et les développements de la constitution Anglaise,' which was published in 1851 as the second volume of the 'Histoire des origines du gouvernement représentatif en Europe.' It is a work kindred in character and spirit to Hallam's 'Constitutional History of England,' although less elaborate. It may very profitably be read before Mr Hallam's work, and in connection with it, as it leaves off about the period at which the other begins.

The 'History of Civilisation in Europe,' and the 'History of Civilisation in France,' are closely connected works; indeed they may be regarded as one work. The former is, as it were, an introductory volume to the five volumes of which the latter consists. It is a summary statement of the positions, which they elucidate with all the illustrations, and confirm with all the proofs, deemed essential. It is indispensable to any right understanding of what M. Guizot has attempted and achieved as an historical philosopher, that we apprehend accurately the relation of these works to each other; and in the first lecture of the 'Cours de 1829' he has been carefully explicit on the subject.

What he says is to the following effect. In the lectures delivered in 1828 he gave a general view of the history of European civilisation, and promised to study it in following years in detail. When he set about attempting, in the lectures for 1829, to fulfil his promise, he found he had to choose between two methods. He might recommence the Course of 1828, and proceed to go over in detail what had been gone over in almost breathless haste. But to that two insuperable objections presented themselves,—the difficulty of maintaining unity in a history so extensive, and the difficulty of mastering the immense extent and variety of knowledge which it required. He decides, therefore, to adopt the other method, that of abandoning the investigation of the general history of European civilisation in all the nations which have shared in it, and confining himself to the civilisation of one country, while yet so marking the differences between it and other countries, that it may reflect an image of the whole destiny of Europe. Although

difficult, it is yet possible to acquire and use the knowledge necessary to proceed thus, and possible also to pass from fact to fact without losing sight of the whole picture—to preserve unity of narrative along with an adequate study of particulars. The important question here arises, Which country ought to be selected ? M. Guizot answers—France. Why ? Because France is the country in which civilisation has appeared in its most complete form, where it has been most diffusive or communicative, and where it has most forcibly struck the European imagination. The superiority of French civilisation to that of other countries is shown not merely in there being greater amenity in social relations, greater gentleness of manners, a more easy and animated life in France than elsewhere, but still more decisively by the fact that there the essential elements of civilisation—the intellectual and social developments —have progressed more equally, and at a shorter distance from each other, than elsewhere. "In England the development of society has been more extensive and more glorious than that of humanity; social interests and social facts have there maintained a more conspicuous place, and exercised more power than general ideas; the nation seems greater than the individual; its great men, even its philosophers, belong to the practical school." "In Germany the development of civilisation has been slow and tardy, and the intellectual development has always surpassed and left behind social development; the human spirit has there been much more prosperous than the human condition." "In Italy civilisation has been neither essentially practical as in England, nor almost exclusively speculative as in Germany; but it has been weighed down and impeded from without, and the two powers—speculative genius and practical ability—have not lived in reciprocal confidence, in correspondence, in continual action and reaction." "In Spain neither great minds nor great events have been wanting, but they have appeared isolated and scattered like palm-trees in a desert." "In France, on the contrary, alongside of great events, revolutions, and public progress, we always find universal ideas and corresponding doctrines. Nothing has passed in the real world but the understanding has immediately seized it, and thence derived new riches; nothing has occurred within the

dominion of understanding which has not had in the real world, and that almost always immediately, its echo and result. This twofold character of intellectual activity and practical ability, of meditation and application, is shown in all the great events of French history, and in all the great classes of French society, and gives them an aspect which we do not find elsewhere. To France, therefore, must be ascribed the honour, that her civilisation has reproduced more faithfully than any other the general type and fundamental idea of civilisation."

M. Guizot, then, it will be observed, when he found himself compelled to study the history of civilisation in one great European nation instead of in all, did not abandon the idea with which he started, that of tracing the general history of European civilisation. He concentrated his faculties and researches on France, but only because he thought he could thus arrive more quickly and surely at the desired result. The positions which he sought to establish in the volumes on the history of civilisation in France, were just those which he had previously laid down in the volume on the history of civilisation in Europe. The more elaborate work was meant, notwithstanding its more special title, to be really as wide in its scope as the other, and to be, in fact, the continuation and development of the other.

But at this point a doubt presents itself which M. Guizot has, perhaps, not satisfactorily dispelled. Does the civilisation of any one European nation give us the general type, or image, or fundamental idea of European civilisation as such? Is the history, for example, of France essentially the history of Europe? Can the whole be discovered in any single part, or even in less than all the parts? I think M. Guizot should have put these questions quite clearly and distinctly to himself—more so, certainly, than he did—and that if he had he would have answered them differently. Had he simply maintained that, by noting the differences and resemblances between the civilisation of one European country and the others, a view of the general civilisation of Europe could be acquired, there would have been no ground for objection. In that case the general view would be obtained, not from a particular civilisation itself, but from its comparison with, and contrast to, the other particular civilisations. Any of the more important countries of Europe might be chosen as the fixed term for this sort of comparison and contrast. Italy, Germany, England, France, would obviously all equally serve the purpose—the truth and value of the result depending, not on which civilisation is made the centre of comparison, but on the accuracy and thoroughness of the process of comparison. But M. Guizot goes much further. He takes up the position that there is a par-

ticular civilisation which answers to the idea of general civilisation; that there is one country in Europe, the civilisation of which is so much more perfect than that of the other countries, that it may be regarded as the normal form of the civilisation of Europe, an approximation to the absolute standard of civilisation, a practical standard by which to measure civilisation everywhere else. Now, a grave suspicion is raised against the legitimacy of this assumption by the fact, that those who make it differ widely as to which nation is to be deemed the pattern nation. Guizot argues that it must be France; but Gioberti writes a book to prove that it must be Italy; Hegel, and the Germans as a body, quietly assume or confidently affirm that the whole of what is called Christian civilisation may equally be called Germanic civilisation; and Mr Buckle has no doubt that the history of England is that which shows most clearly "the normal march of society, and the undisturbed operation of those great laws by which the fortunes of mankind are ultimately regulated."

It is not enough to refer this variety of discordant decisions to the operation of national prejudices. The question still remains, Why is it—how is it—that national prejudices have in this instance such power? And the only satisfactory answer to this question is, —because no particular civilisation is normal, or answers as a whole to the idea of civilisation. It can only be made to appear so by narrowing the idea of civilisation to suit the pretensions put forth on its behalf. By a similar narrowing of the idea, quite as warranted, another standard may be obtained which will be as favourable to some other civilisation. Grant that in the civilisation of France intellectual activity and practical ability, meditation and application, have, as M. Guizot says, progressed more equally, and at a shorter distance from each other, than in England — and what then? Does it follow that it reproduces better the general type and fundamental idea of civilisation than the civilisation of England? No; but merely that it reproduces it better in one respect. It may reproduce it much worse in some equally essential respect. And an Englishman looking at it in *that* respect may quite as fairly conclude it to be inferior to English civilisation, as M. Guizot has concluded it to be superior.

This is precisely what Mr Buckle has done. He, like M. Guizot, found himself compelled, by the magnitude of the task, to write the history, not of general civilisation, but of the civilisation of a single people; and he has endeavoured, still more elaborately than M. Guizot, to show that he could realise the larger design within the narrower compass.[1] He fixes, however, on England as the nation which has approached nearest to a complete and perfect pattern, chiefly on the ground that, "of all European countries, England is

[1] Hist. of Civilisation in England, i. 209-221, 1st ed.

the one where, during the longest period, the government has been most quiescent, and the people most active; where popular freedom has been settled on the widest basis; where each man is most able to say what he thinks, and to do what he likes; where every one can follow his own bent, and propagate his own opinions; where, religious persecution being little known, the play and flow of the human mind may be clearly seen, unchecked by those restraints to which it is elsewhere subjected; where the profession of heresy is least dangerous, and the practice of dissent most common; where hostile creeds flourish side by side, and rise and decay without disturbance, according to the wants of the people, unaffected by the wishes of the Church, and uncontrolled by the authority of the State; where all interests and all classes, both spiritual and temporal, are most left to take care of themselves; where that meddlesome doctrine called Protection was first attacked, and where alone it has been destroyed; and where, in a word, those dangerous extremes to which interference gives rise having been avoided, despotism and rebellion are equally rare, and concession being recognised as the groundwork of policy, the national progress has been least disturbed by the power of privileged classes, by the influence of particular sects, or by the violence of arbitrary rulers." Now, the reason which Mr Buckle thus gives for choosing English civilisation as normal, may be no better than M. Guizot's for choosing French civilisation, but neither is it worse. It presupposes a different standard, but one quite as good.

And this holds true even if we grant the accuracy of the objection which M. Guizot makes to English civilisation—viz., that it has been more favourable to the development of society than of humanity, of the nation than of the individual. It is an objection, however, I may remark, which Englishmen at least will certainly not grant, and in which probably few candid foreigners even will concur. We in England are generally under the belief that historical and social conditions have been in no Continental nation so favourable to the development of individuality as here; and, with all due distrust of national judgments, as exceedingly likely indeed to be baseless prejudices, I think this is one the truth of which few competent third parties will contest. I am quite unable to see that the great men of England have belonged more exclusively to the practical school than those of France. Its philosophers do not seem to me to have done so, and I profess to have studied most of the philosophers of both countries.

I might proceed to show that claims as strong might be put forward on behalf of the civilisation of Italy and Germany, as those which Guizot has produced for that of France, and Mr Buckle for that of England. Was not Italy from the fall of the Roman Empire to the Reformation, on the whole, the most civilised nation

of Europe, and that which exerted, through religion, learning, art industry, and commerce, the greatest influence on the civilisation of other nations? The time which has elapsed since is comparatively short. While France developed her civilisation along the path of centralisation, Germany seemed to retrograde by travelling in the opposite direction; but does it not remain to be seen which path is really the best, and whether France, after having apparently moved straight up to the goal, may not have to retrace her steps and come back by another way before she can truly reach it? That Germany has gone round about and France straight forward, by no means of itself proves that the French course has been the better one, and still less that it is the only right one. A straight line is in practice often the greatest distance between two points. I deem, then, the claims made on behalf of various civilisations to be regarded as the exclusive representatives of general civilisation no less inadequate and illusory than they are invidious. If true in what they affirm, they are false in what they deny. Alike in France, Germany, England, and Italy, civilisation has had a special and one-sided, not a general and normal development. It cannot be fairly judged of in any one of them by what it is in any other. If we would know the general type of civilisation we must study all the specimens of civilisation, and especially all its chief specimens. A part can never be the whole.

The first three lectures of the Course of 1828—that on "The General History of Civilisation in Europe"—contain the preliminary observations which M. Guizot deemed necessary. They are a statement of views and principles essential to a right understanding of his labours in the department of historical philosophy. He begins in the most natural manner—viz., with an attempt to fix the meaning of the terms "European civilisation." That is his subject. It presents a very wide field for research, beyond which he has not attempted to range. He has never sought to construct a philosophy of history—he has never professed to have discovered a universal law of history; he has attempted only to analyse the civilisation of Christian Europe into its elements, and to trace the causes and stages of its development. In this reference nothing can be more accurate or succinct than the words of Mr Mill: "His subject is not history at large, but modern European history; the formation and progress of the existing nations of Europe. Embracing, therefore, only a part of the succession of historical events, he is precluded from attempting to determine the law or laws which preside

over the entire evolution. If there be such laws—if the series of states through which human nature and society are destined to pass, have been determined more or less precisely by the original constitution of mankind, and by the circumstances of the planet on which we live—the order of their succession cannot be discovered by modern or by European experience alone; it must be ascertained by a conjunct analysis, so far as possible, of the whole of history, and the whole of human nature. M. Guizot stops short of this ambitious enterprise; but, considered as preparatory studies for promoting and facilitating it, his writings are most valuable. He seeks, not the ultimate, but the proximate, causes of the facts of modern history; he inquires in what manner each successive condition of modern Europe grew out of that which next preceded it; and how modern society altogether, and the modern mind, shaped themselves from the elements which had been transmitted to them from the ancient world."[1]

M. Guizot uses these terms "European civilisation," he says, because it is evident that there is a European civilisation; that a certain unity pervades the civilisation of the various European states; that, notwithstanding infinite diversities of time, place, and circumstance, this civilisation takes its first rise in facts almost wholly similar, proceeds everywhere upon the same principles, and tends to produce almost everywhere analogous results. He insists that civilisation is as really a fact as any material and visible individual event; a general, hidden, complex fact, difficult to describe, difficult to trace the progress or history of, but which none the less exists, with a right to be described and to have its history written. What, then, he asks, is involved in this complex fact which we call civilisation?

He answers, that, in the first place, it involves progress, improvement, amelioration; but, in proof, he merely appeals to "the natural good sense of mankind," to "general instinct." As regards the progress of which he says that civilisation consists, he represents it as comprehending two facts or conditions: the development of society, the perfecting of civil life, on the one hand; and the development of the individual or internal life of man himself, his faculties, sentiments, and ideas, on the

[1] Dissertations and Discussions, ii. 223-4.

other hand. And these two conditions, these two movements —the progress of society and the progress of humanity—are, he argues, so connected, that, sooner or later, whatever improves or degrades the internal man turns to the profit or hurt of society, and whatever affects the development of society similarly affects the individual. The progress of humanity is the end; that of society the means.

It has been said that M. Guizot forgets this distinction in practice, and studies exclusively the progress of society. Those who have urged the charge, however, have overlooked the Course of 1829, which is the only complete Course of the three, and in which there is a careful examination, not merely of the political but of the intellectual state of Europe during the period of which it treats; and that the lectures of 1828 and 1830 did not embrace more than political and social development, simply because the Courses of these years were unfinished,—the former having been begun late, and the latter prematurely broken off in consequence of political events.

More might be said for an attack on the distinction itself. Humanity — internal life — intellectual development, are hardly synonymous expressions, and they are neither logical antitheses nor co-ordinates to society—civil life—political development. But it must be considered that a logically satisfactory division is here scarcely possible, and that whatever faults that of M. Guizot may have had, it was not only much better than none, but very tolerably served his purpose.

The appeal to "natural good sense" or "general instinct" for proof of civilisation implying progress is plainly illegitimate. They have no right to pronounce civilisation to be progress, or even progress to be an essential and universal characteristic of civilisation. The truth or falsity of these propositions must be determined by facts; and the facts happen to establish that both are false. A very large part of the civilisation of the world is stationary or declining. Progressive civilisation is probably not the rule but the exception. It is only progressive civilisation which involves the notion of progress. But although progress is not essentially implied in the idea of civilisation, the opinion of Guizot to the contrary exerts no evil influence on the course of his speculations, seeing that European civilisation, the real subject of his studies, is, viewed as a whole, undoubtedly progressive.

He shows in the second lecture that modern civilisation is distinguished from ancient civilisation by being much less simple, much more diversified and complicated, by the continued coexistence, conflict, and co-operation of a vast variety of powers

and interests which in the ancient world were found apart. He insists that this in great part accounts for its superiority. And he explains it by the great diversity of the elements from which, and of the circumstances under which, modern society was formed. When Rome fell, she left behind her the municipal system, the idea of imperial majesty, and a body of written law; nor did she drag down with her the Christian Church, an organisation resting on religious doctrines and convictions, and possessed of a regular government and definite aims. Alongside of the Church was the barbaric invasion, animated by a spirit of personal liberty and of voluntary association previously unknown. Thus, at the beginning of modern civilisation, there were almost all the elements which have united in its progressive development; three societies—the municipal, a legacy of the Roman Empire, the Christian, and the Barbaric society—very variously organised, founded upon wholly different principles, and inspiring men with wholly different sentiments. "We find the craving after the most absolute independence side by side with the most complete submission; military patronage side by side with ecclesiastical dominion; the spiritual and temporal powers everywhere present; the canons of the Church, the learned legislation of the Romans, the almost unwritten customs of the barbarians; everywhere the mixture, or rather the coexistence of the most diverse races, languages, social situations, manners, ideas, and impressions." This lecture has justly been the object of special admiration. The theory it contains is not only indubitably true as a whole, but highly important and beautifully expounded.

M. Guizot proceeds in the third lecture to point out that although the facts are as he has stated, an opinion directly to the contrary prevails, and each element, each system, has put forth a claim to have alone ruled society. "A school of feudal publicists, represented by M. de Boulanvilliers, pretends that after the fall of the Roman Empire, the conquering nation, afterwards become the nobility, possessed all powers and rights, which they have lost only through the usurpation of kings and peoples; a school of monarchists, represented by the Abbé Dubos, maintains, on the other hand, that all the acquisitions of the nobility have been unjustly wrung from the German kings, who, as the

heirs of the Roman emperors, alone ruled legitimately; a democratic school, represented by the Abbé de Mably, argues that nobles and kings have only risen to power on the ruins of popular freedom, and that the government of society primitively belonged to, and still properly belongs to, the people; while above all these monarchical, aristocratical, and popular pretensions, rises theocratical pretension, the claim of the Church to rule society in virtue of her divine title and mission." This leads our author to insist first on what he calls the idea of political legitimacy. All powers claim to be legitimate. They all refuse to admit themselves founded on force. They all thereby profess to rest on right, justice, reason. And this is why they also claim long duration, a high antiquity; for the mere fact that a power has long existed is itself a ground for believing that reason and right have in some measure belonged to it. "From the mere fact of its enduring, we may conclude with certainty that a society is not completely absurd, insensate, or iniquitous—that it is not utterly destitute of those elements of reason, truth, and justice which alone can give life to society. If, further, the society develops itself—if its principle grows in strength and is daily accepted by a greater number of men—that convincingly proves that in the lapse of time there has been progressively introduced into it more reason, justice, and right. It is this introduction of right and truth into the social state which has given rise to the idea of political legitimacy; it is thus that it has been established in modern civilisation."

M. Guizot is here—what he very rarely is—obscure; the reason of which no doubt is, the mysterious nature of the subject, the inscrutable profundity of the idea of political legitimacy. It is only in the dark that such a spectre of a thought can show itself. The light causes it to vanish—makes apparent its nonentity. It pretends to be a something—a right to authority—a claim to obedience; but the slightest criticism, the slightest explanation even, shows it to be in and of itself absolutely nothing. The right of any power to rule in society depends solely on the truth and justice of the reasons on which the right is rested; legitimacy is a word which may be allowably used to express a conviction that these reasons are in a given instance satisfactory, but not to denote a reason in itself, nor anything apart from the reasons, anything added to or developed out of the reasons. Of course, if this were admitted, there would be an end of what is spoken of as political legitimacy in France.

A French legitimist is a man who argues that the claims of his party to rule are good because of legitimacy, not that they are legitimate exclusively because, and only in so far as, they are good. Legitimacy is a fiction which he interposes between his own mind or the public mind and reasons which he half-consciously suspects to be an insufficient basis for his theory; a fiction which serves to conceal their insufficiency from himself and others. It is curious to see a mind like that of M. Guizot under the sway of so poor an idol; curious to see how, instead of "casting it to the moles and bats," he decks and dresses it up anew for public homage. To M. de Boulanvilliers, feudalist; the Abbé Dubos, monarchist; the Abbé de Mably, democrat; and the Comte de Maistre, defender of the theocracy, he virtually says,—"I admit all your claims; you are all right in what you affirm, and wrong only in what you deny—the powers which you severally defend are all legitimate: and my system, which comprehends and harmonises them all, is consequently pre-eminently legitimate. It is a great word—a great idea—legitimacy." And there is a certain impartiality and comprehensiveness in the answer which makes it attractive and plausible. Yet none the less is it erroneous and ensnaring. The cobweb may not be so perceptible when thus drawn out wider and thinner, but that is all,—it is still there. The truth in this case is not to be found in a general affirmation, but in a general negation. The claims which different parties have made under the name of legitimacy have not had their source in the facts and reasons which truly entitle these parties to a certain measure of authority; but *in the insufficiency of their facts and reasons as a title to all the authority which they desire to exercise.* Instead, therefore, of all the claims being granted, all ought to be repelled and this truth affirmed—that no power has any other legitimacy than its reasonableness and its utility. This, besides being a truth, will be found at least as impartial and comprehensive a conclusion as M. Guizot's.

He next maintains that "the very dispute which has arisen between the various systems that have a share in European civilisation upon the question which predominated at its origin, proves that then they all coexisted, without any one of them prevailing generally enough, or certainly enough, to give to society its form and its name." He points out that this was precisely the characteristic of the barbarian epoch. "It was the chaos of all elements, the infancy of all systems, a universal turmoil, in which even strife was not systematic." The work of the centuries which have since elapsed has been to effect in some measure the reconciliation of these elements, the amalgamation of these systems, and to bring order and peace, with

their products, out of this chaos and turmoil. And the task which M. Guizot proposed to himself was to trace the progress of the work of the centuries.

Other labours—other duties—prevented the complete performance of what he intended; but he accomplished sufficient to show both the excellence of his method of operation and the superiority of his intellect. The history of Europe from the fall of the Roman Empire is divided into three periods; the period of confusion, the feudal period, and the modern period. The outlines of the development of civilisation during these three periods were twice drawn by M. Guizot, first in the 'Essais' and next in the 'Cours de 1828.' But he rightly felt that outlines were not enough—that what was above all needed was a thorough, a detailed, an exhaustive analysis of civilisation. In the 'Cours de 1829' he undertook and accomplished such an analysis of civilisation, so far as it was represented by the civilisation of France, for the period of confusion—for the five centuries between Clovis and the end of the Carlovingian dynasty. In the following year he entered on the analysis of the feudal period; and was carrying it forward on the same comprehensive scale, and with an ability and success no less remarkable, when his Course was abruptly terminated before it was half finished—before the speculative, religious, and literary characteristics of the period had been brought under review. Beyond that point the work, unfortunately, never got. The last or strictly modern period of European, or even French history, was never taken up at all. Thus the Course of 1829 is the only one in which the method of M. Guizot is seen fully exemplified; in which a period of civilisation is analysed with the thoroughness and exhaustiveness which he deemed essential. It is especially in it that his historical philosophy is to be seen in operation. Let us recall what he does there.

After the preliminary lecture to which I have already had occasion to refer, he describes the social and intellectual, the civil and religious, state of society in Gaul prior to the German invasion, at the end of the fourth and the beginning of the fifth century (L. 2-6); then the dispositions, the manners, and institutions of the Germans before they began to take possession of the lands of the Celt and the Roman (7); and next, the invasion

and conquest itself, its character, the changes it caused in the distribution of society, its various immediate consequences (8). These are, as it were, the three scenes of the first act of the drama. After having delineated them, our author turns to trace through the two following centuries the action and reaction of the Barbarian and Romanised societies, their progressive development and amalgamation, alike in the civil, the religious, and the intellectual order of things. As to the civil order, he shows how the Barbarian codes of law arose and how the Roman law was perpetuated (9-11). As to the religious order, he explains the internal organisation of the Church, the varieties of grade and function among its regular and secular clergy, its relations with civil society, its aims, its tendencies, its influence (12-15). And, as illustrative of the intellectual life of the period, he analyses and describes its scanty literature, both sacred and profane (16-18).

The fall of the Merovingian and the rise of the Carlovingian dynasty about the middle of the eighth century introduced a third epoch, a third act. After showing the nature and causes of that revolution (19), M. Guizot dwells upon the position and significance of the reign of Charlemagne—on the character and designs of that great monarch—on his influence, direct and indirect, on outward affairs, legislation, and the development of mind. Thence he proceeds to trace, step by step, the operation of the causes which decomposed his vast empire, and, at the same time, produced the feudal system (20-25). Nor does he forget to study either the history of the Church (26-27) or the movement and manifestations of reflective thought (28-29) during the same period.

In fact, he analyses the entire constitution and development of society during these five centuries; lays bare all its essential elements, all its chief forces; traces them all continuously from the beginning to the end of the period investigated; traces them separately, yet also in connection, never forgetting that they are the component parts or principles of a single self-dependent and active whole.

The originality of M. Guizot's work consists in the truly scientific spirit and character of his method. He was the first to dissect a society in the same comprehensive, impartial, and

thorough way in which an anatomist dissects the body of an animal, and the first to study the functions of the social organism in the same systematic and careful manner in which the physiologist studies the functions of the animal organism. Before him there had been a vast amount both of historical research and historical speculation; states, ages, classes, individuals, had had their histories, some of which were excellent; the development of laws, manners, sciences, arts, letters, had been traced, and in some cases not only learnedly but with considerable insight into causation; and there had even been systems not a few as to the course, and plan, and laws of history as a whole; yet he was fully entitled, I think, to speak of the work he accomplished as new. It was not conceived of before the eighteenth century. It was first truly commenced by himself. And what a noble commencement he made! Of course in a work so extensive, so difficult, every careful student must find something to criticise, something to dissent from; yet few will deny that it is a model of scientific skill, comprehensively treating of all the vast variety of facts included in civilisation, while never allowing to drop out of sight the unity of life that underlies the multiplied manifestations; that it is not only wonderfully true and satisfactory as an organic whole, but that it has illuminated a multitude of particular points and dispelled a multitude of serious errors; that it disclosed in every order of social phenomena a significance unnoticed before, by the manner in which it showed them in constant contact with the other orders of phenomena.

The application which M. Guizot made of his method to a portion of history was conclusive evidence that the same method could be applied to all history. It was, however, more. It was a practical, irrefragable proof of the existence of a science of history, not indeed in every sense of the word science, but in the most usual sense, the only sense in which there is a science of geology or of physiology. He applied the same sort of method, the same rules of method, which are employed in these sciences, and he obtained results as certain, as comprehensive, as important, as those which are reached through geological or physiological research. The term science may be so strictly defined that branches of knowledge like geology and physiology have no

right to be called sciences; the term law is very often so defined that no geological or physiological truth is entitled to the name; but if science and law be used so as to include such divisions of knowledge and to designate their highest truths, there can be no reasonable doubt of the existence of historical science and historical law. M. Guizot has proved their existence, as Columbus proved the existence of the New World when he sailed onwards until he reached it.

IV.

It is especially by their researches into the history of philosophy that those who are regarded as followers of Cousin have contributed to the philosophical study of history, and to a profounder and more enlarged conception of the development of humanity. They have not attempted to construct philosophies of history; but several of them have dealt with special aspects and problems of historical philosophy; and, in particular, with the idea of progress. I shall briefly notice some of the most interesting of the works which treat of this theme.

In 1851 M. Javary (1820-56) published his 'Idée de Progrès.' It was the first really good general treatment of its subject. It was at once an important contribution to the history of the idea of progress, a careful analysis of the nature of progress, and a judicious criticism of the chief erroneous views prevalent regarding progress.

Its author's independence, as well as soundness, of judgment is everywhere apparent. Although accepting the general principles of Cousin's philosophy, he does not hesitate to reject his particular conclusions. He vigorously opposes the historical optimism which Cousin derived from Hegel and endeavoured to propagate in France. He solidly refutes such *dicta* as that "whatever is is good," and that "evil necessarily produces good"; combats the fatalistic theory of history; and maintains that human progress is not the inevitable result of natural laws and forces, but that it largely depends on how individuals and societies employ the freedom with which they have been

endowed whether there will be progress or decadence. He indicates with special clearness the moral and religious conditions which are implied in healthy social development. The distinctive characteristic of true progress is represented by him as advance towards a complete realisation of human nature through its own spiritual energy; that is, through the victory of the rational and moral will over the passions which war against the higher life of the soul.

In M. Javary's work we may not find any absolutely original ideas; but we never fail to find important and carefully considered ideas. Like his 'De la Certitude,' it is a book which no one specially studying its subject can afford to neglect.

The question of progress has also been treated, and with characteristic ingenuity, by M. Bouillier, the eminent author of the 'History of Cartesianism.' In his 'Morale et Progrès,' he seeks to determine how far there has been progress, and how far there has not. The investigation is throughout conducted with reference to the positions regarding progress maintained by Mr Buckle in his 'History of Civilisation in England,' and the discussions to which they gave rise.

M. Bouillier describes progress as a legacy or inheritance which is transmitted from generation to generation, and which increases with the advance of the ages. Only what can be transmitted and accumulated is susceptible of progress. He draws a distinction between the elements or matter and the conditions or means of progress. Its elements are intellectual facts, the various kinds of knowledge. Its conditions are the qualities of the will,—character, virtue. The former are perfectible in the species; the latter are perfectible only in the individual. The acquisitions of intellect do not disappear with the death of those who make them. Truths once discovered inventions once found out, have only to be made known, and the knowledge of them "wakes to perish never." If a great physicist through his labours extends the limits and increases the treasures of science, advances the industrial arts, facilitates the production of wealth, and enriches civilisation, he does so for the good of the world in all time. Any young man with a turn for physical science may easily serve himself heir to the

whole of the intellectual legacy which he bequeathed to the race. The gains of intellect being thus transmitted from person to person, from generation to generation, are constantly accumulating; the intellectual capital of mankind grows steadily vaster; and those who live latest, and are the heirs of all the ages, are the richest. In a word, intellectual progress is a fact. Moral acquisitions, however, are not transmitted and accumulated. They are entirely personal. Virtue is not heritable. There is no evidence that the force of will necessary for conformity to moral law is increased in the course of ages; or that the men of to-day act up to their standard of duty more faithfully than those of the earliest times. There is, therefore, not a growth of virtue in the species, as there is of knowledge. We are not entitled to affirm the existence of moral progress.

Thus far the conclusions at which M. Bouillier arrives are the same as those of Mr Buckle, although the reasons which he gives both for admitting intellectual progress and for denying moral progress are different. Yet even the general point of view from which he surveys history, and the spirit in which he judges it, are in one respect very unlike those of the English writer. Buckle represents the intellect as not only alone perfectible, but as the alone active and important factor in history; and morality as not stationary but without influence and significance in social development. In his eyes the great fact in history is progress; and the essence of progress is enlightenment, and the cause of enlightenment is the triumph of intellect over ignorance of nature and faith. This mode of thought does not at all commend itself to Bouillier; it seems to him uncritical and superficial. Progress he thinks over-praised; and enlightenment as well. Severed from virtue they are really of slight account. Ages intellectually cultured but morally corrupt are not great ages, and they initiate weakness and decay. Without the impulse and support of virtue progress cannot sustain itself, and knowledge fails to benefit those who possess it. Although will, force of character, does not itself make progress in humanity, it is the motive power of all human progress.

While M. Bouillier acknowledges progress to be a fact, he refuses to admit that there is or can be a *law* of progress. Law

implies necessary causation, but history and progress are effectuated through causes which are not necessary,—through free agents, free wills.

I shall make only a very few observations on the views thus indicated.

The description given of progress as constituted by the transmission and accumulation of truths, experiences, and acquisitions is clear and accurate. The criticism of Buckle's glorification of intellect and of progress, and of his depreciation of the function and significance of morality in history, is incisive and conclusive. That there is not sufficient evidence to warrant the affirmation that the men of the present day are more virtuous than those of early times is probably to be admitted, if by virtue be meant fidelity to the law of duty so far as it is apprehended, conscientiousness, meritoriousness. Thus far M. Bouillier seems to me to establish what he maintains.

Yet he has failed, I think, to draw the true distinction between what is progressive and unprogressive in the species. That distinction is not the distinction between intellect and virtue, but the more general distinction between the powers or internal principles of the mind and their products or external results. There is insufficient evidence for holding that any of the former, whether intellectual or moral, are capable of being transmitted and accumulated. We can no more prove that the Europeans of to-day surpass the primitive Aryans in power of reason or imagination than we can prove that they surpass them in force of will, virtue of character. We can no more show that the great men of ancient Greece and Rome were not intellectually, than we can show that they were not morally, the equals of the great men of modern France and England. It seems to me irrelevant to discuss in connection with history the question whether or not there has been a growth of virtue in a sense of which history can tell us nothing. Such a discussion may be necessary in ethics and theology, but it cannot in the least decide whether or not there has been moral progress.

It is obvious that moral gains, in the form of thoughts, sentiments, examples, influences, customs, and institutions, not

only can be, but are constantly being transmitted; and that in consequence the moral wealth of mankind is increased from age to age. The fundamental principles of morality are few, and may have all been discovered in very early times, but their applications are innumerable, and no limit can be set to their development. Justice and charity are as capable of an endless and ever-varying evolution in conduct and institutions as truth and beauty are in the sciences and fine arts. The poets have contributed immensely to enrich and refine the moral feelings of mankind. Grand moral examples can be as effectively perpetuated as great scientific discoveries or important mechanical inventions. Socrates lives for ever in the pages of Plato and Xenophon, and Jesus in those of the Evangelists. The children of the earliest fetish-worshippers may have been born with as honest and good hearts as those of Christian parents in the nineteenth century, but they were certainly born to a far poorer moral heritage; and, relatively to their lights, means, and opportunities, they may have lived as faithfully and virtuously, but their lights, means, and opportunities were vastly different and vastly inferior.

The reality of free agency is not a sufficient reason for denying that progress can have a law. Progress implies law, inasmuch as it implies order and development. But it implies only such law as is involved in order and development, not a law of mere mechanical causation; only such law as can be discovered by observation and analysis, not such law as can be dealt with by deduction and calculation. There is, however, no fact in history which is of such a nature that it cannot be traced to a cause, or even which is not necessarily just what it was caused to be. The freedom of the human will does not imply that the connection between the actions and the effects, which are the only components of history, has not been a necessary connection, but only that there *might have been* other actions which would necessarily have had quite other effects. If free-will be admitted, we must infer that there might have been a very different human history than the actual one; but not that the actual one is other than the result of all the causes which really acted. Free agency transcends history; only realities, not possibilities,—only actual volitions and their

effects,—compose history, and the connection between them must be acknowledged to be a necessary connection.[1]

Spiritualistic philosophy has had no more accomplished expositor and defender in France during the present generation than the late M. Caro. The greatest problems of thought, those which lie at the very foundation of theodicy, ethics, and sociology—of belief in God, the soul, duty, and immortality—were those on which his interest was especially concentrated. He was brilliant alike as a lecturer and a writer. Hardly in any age has there appeared so consummate a master of the art of philosophical polemic. The lucidity and grace, the exquisite blending of naturalness and refinement, and the perfect accordance of thought and feeling with their expression, which characterise all his compositions, are reflections of the harmony and beauty of his personality, expressions of the light and sweetness of a most lovable character.[2]

He has devoted four chapters of his 'Problèmes de la Morale Sociale,' 1876, to the consideration of social progress. He first gives a general view of the history of the idea, and dwells particularly on its transformations in the nineteenth century. He had studied closely the growth of the theory of evolution, or of physiological determinism, as applied to history, and his observations on the forms which it had assumed under the hands of Comte and Littré, of Buckle, Bagehot, and Spencer, are of special interest. He further treats of the laws and limits of progress in science, industry, institutions, morality, and art. The discussion is throughout marked by comprehensiveness and penetration of view, by caution and sureness of judgment, by ingenuity and eloquence. All its main conclusions seem to me sound. In the portion of it relating to

[1] There is a valuable essay by M. Bouillier on an important historical theme, *La justice historique*, in the 'Compte Rendu de l'Acad. d. Sc. mor. et pol.,' t. xxv., 1886; and a sagacious discussion of the question *Y a-t-il une philosophie de l'histoire?* in 'Rev. phil.,' t. xxi., pp. 329-347.

[2] Regarding the life and writings of M. Caro, see the *Notices* of M. Constant Martha (in vol. i. of 'Mélanges et Portraits'), of M. Ch. Waddington (in 'Compte Rendu de l'Acad. d. Sci. mor. et pol.,' Mai-Juin 1889), and of M. Jules Simon (in January No., 1890, of same publication). Also Art. of M. Brunetière in 'Rev. d. Deux Mondes,' 1 Juin 1888.

moral progress the criticism of the theory of M. Bouillier deserves to be noted.

Two other chapters of the same volume concern historical philosophy. The first (chap. vi.) is an examination of the evolutionist hypothesis of the origin and future of societies. The relevancy and the gravity of the objections which he urges against it are only too obvious; but it is, perhaps, to be desired that he had more distinctly indicated what is true or probable in it, as he might quite consistently have done. The other chapter (xv.) is that with which the work closes. Its subject is "human destiny according to the scientific schools." The conception of human destiny implied in those positivist, evolutionist, and pessimist systems, which represent faith in the Divine as incompatible with the findings of science, is strikingly exhibited, and it is maintained to be such as of itself renders these systems very doubtful. In the working out of this argument, skilful use is made of the painfully interesting volume ('Poésies philosophiques') in which a woman of genius (Madame Ackermann) has made apparent how terribly the science, falsely so called, at present prevalent, may darken and disorder even a vigorous mind.

I pass to another author whose memory is also dear to me, the late M. Ludovic Carrau. His life was brief but fruitful. He early made himself known to the philosophical world by his important work 'Morale utilitaire,' which was followed by 'Études sur l'évolution' and 'Philosophie religieuse en Angleterre.' The works testify to the thoroughness of his studies, the amplitude and accuracy of his information, and the clearness, strength, and acuteness of his understanding.[1]

While engaged on the translation of my 'Philosophy of History in France and Germany,' he wrote, partly with reference to it, an interesting and able article on the subject of progress in the 'Revue des Deux Mondes' (Oct. 1875). In this essay he indicates and characterises the various ways in which progress has been conceived of, and in which it has been attempted to reach and formulate its law. He fully recognises the difficulties of determining with sufficient precision its law, or even

[1] See M. Fr. Picavet's 'M. Ludovic Carrau,' 1889.

its conditions and end. But he holds that the reality of progress is certain. Evolution, as a mass of evidence shows, has been a feature of all nature, "the universal formula of existence;" and historical progress is a variety or department of evolution. The course of evolution, although for countless ages mainly physical and animal, was always upwards, and issued at length in the appearance of man; its interest since has been chiefly spiritual, and its direction, so far as it has yet gone, has been still more clearly that of elevation and improvement. It is true, however, that man is not borne upward and forward by any fatalistic or physically necessary law; he is a rational and free being, and his progress is just the triumph of reason and moral liberty over nature and necessity. Man has been so constituted in intellect and in heart that he cannot but form ideals of truth, beauty, happiness, and perfection which he feels drawn and bound to strive to reach and to realise. It is through the general yielding of mankind to this sense of attraction and of obligation that the history of humanity is a movement of growing approximation towards a goal which will never be completely reached, but every step towards which means fuller knowledge, greater reasonableness, a richer enjoyment of beauty, a more perfect righteousness, a purer and more diffused happiness. There is no evidence that the course of nature and of history will be reversed, so as to tend towards unreason, unrighteousness, and misery, towards death, darkness, and chaos. If the power which made and rules the world and humanity be rational and righteous such a reversal is incredible. The main conclusion, in short, reached by M. Carrau is one to which an English poetess has given magnificent expression; the conclusion that we may well

> "Rest in faith
> That man's perfection is the crowning flower,
> Towards which the urgent sap in life's great tree
> Is pressing,—seen in puny blossoms now,
> But in the world's great morrows to expand
> With broadest petal and with deepest glow."[1]

[1] George Eliot, 'The Spanish Gypsy.' All M. Carrau's 'Études sur la théorie de l'évolution' bear on historical philosophy, and are eminently judicious and instructive. They treat of the following subjects: (1) the origin of instinct and of thought; (2) the origin of man; (3) the origin of belief in a future life; (4)

V.

The influence of Guizot is perceptible on almost all later French historians. It is easily traceable in the writings of many who were personally and politically hostile to him, as, *e.g.*, Michelet and Quinet. Those who rejected his doctrinarianism were often more doctrinarian than himself, and that in fashions which bore his impress. Like the eclecticism of Cousin, the doctrinarianism of Guizot, in its strictest acceptation, was almost confined to its propounder, but in a wider yet very real sense, or, in other words, in its general spirit and principles, it also, like eclecticism, entered very widely into the creed of studious men. His analytic and inductive method of dealing with history as a complex and ever-varying, an organic and spiritual development, was followed to a still greater extent. In the present chapter I shall refer only to one of the philosophical historians influenced by Guizot, but to one of the most celebrated and most esteemed.

Alexis de Tocqueville (1805-58) was a high-minded and pure-hearted man, of rare beauty of character and life. He was a moderate and judicious, profound and sagacious thinker. His faith in the liberalism of his Church was a natural and amiable illusion. Some political mistakes into which we may think he fell should not cause us to withhold from him the admiration due to the political wisdom of which he gave ample proof.[1]

He had no belief in the easy discovery of general laws of historical evolution. He did not profess to have discovered, or

the origin of primitive worships ; (5) the origin of the moral sense ; and (6) the origin of language. The essay noticed in the text was republished in the volume entitled 'La conscience psychologique et morale dans l'individu et dans l'histoire,' 1888, which contains several articles on subjects closely akin to those dealt with in the 'Études.'

[1] Mr Henry Reeve has enriched our literature with an excellent translation of De Tocqueville's writings. They have nowhere found more appreciative readers and reviewers than in Britain. I have felt bound to refrain from dwelling on their general merits and characteristics, work well performed already by Alison, Mill, and others, and simply to indicate their relation to historical philosophy. 'The Memoir, Letters, and Remains of Alexis de Tocqueville, translated from the French by the translator of Napoleon's Correspondence with King Joseph,' 2 vols., 1861, renders into English the charming work of M. Gustave de Beaumont, and supplements it with large and interesting additions.

even to be aware of, any such laws himself; although, as he jocularly observed, he heard almost every morning that somebody had been more fortunate, and had found a hitherto unknown fundamental law of history by means of which the most wonderful social improvements were to be brought about. He had a constitutional aversion to all general historical speculation, because it could not be based on a full and accurate knowledge of the whole time and space, of the whole mass of facts, covered by its conclusions. He could always find scope enough for his powers of acquisition and reflection, great as they were, within a comparatively limited area; and he preferred cultivating a small and distinctly defined territory thoroughly, to cultivating a vast and vague one superficially.

But notwithstanding this jealousy of general historical philosophy, both his 'De la Démocratie en Amérique,' 1835, and his 'L'Ancien Régime et la Révolution,' 1856, have great interest and value for the historical philosopher. The former especially is an original and masterly application of the inductive method to the study of history. Never before had the social characteristics of a country been so faithfully observed and skilfully analysed, or so ingeniously yet impartially compared with those of a country very different in its history, and very differently circumstanced in many ways, in order to discover the real workings of certain dispositions or tendencies of spirit which they possessed in common. As an admirable exemplification of the logical processes by which social and historical science is to be obtained, the work is invaluable, independently of the worth of its results. Most of these processes, indeed, Guizot had already successfully practised in his examination of the development of European civilisation: but it fell to De Tocqueville to employ them with a fulness of illustration, a thoroughness, and a detail, only possible within a more limited and manageable sphere; and to show that a smaller field with a more intensive and elaborate culture would yield a harvest of results not less rich and precious than a much larger one less carefully and skilfully tilled.

De Tocqueville's work had an immense success. It set a vast number of persons to theorising on the tendencies of democracy, and to studying the institutions of the United States.

To the interest which it excited and the impulse which it gave, we owe a multitude of works on democracy and on America, some of which are of great value, as, *e.g.*, to mention only the two best of those which have lately appeared, the 'De la Démocratie' of Laveleye and the 'American Commonwealth' of Prof. Bryce. They have all derived to some extent their existence, and even the best of them much of their merit, from the epoch-making treatise of De Tocqueville.

A part of the task, however, which he attempted in that treatise was one which the human intellect can as yet accomplish with only very partial success, namely, the forecasting of the future. Induction from the facts of history is too difficult, and deduction from its tendencies too hypothetical, to allow of this being done with much certainty or precision; hence it is not to be wondered at that several of his anticipations or prophecies have not yet been confirmed, and seem now less probable than when they were first enunciated. It is more remarkable that he should have been so often and so far right; and that he should have been always so conscious that he might very probably be mistaken. Adequately to appreciate the latter merit, we have only to contrast him with a man like Auguste Comte, almost wholly destitute of humility, and consequently always sure that every vaticination of his would be fulfilled, yet almost never making even a tolerably successful guess as to the course which events were about to take either in France or elsewhere. Humility is essential to foresight; and De Tocqueville's foresight was largely due to his humility.

He shared in democratic convictions, but with intelligence and in moderation. He acknowledged that democracy at its conceivable best would be the best of all forms of government; the one to which all others ought to give place. And he was fully persuaded that all others were rapidly making way for it; and that the movement towards it which had been so visibly going on for at least a century could by no means be arrested. He elaborated his proof of the irresistibility and invincibility of the democratic movement, and he emphasised and reiterated the conclusion itself, because he deemed it to be of prime importance that men should be under no illusion on the matter. He succeeded at once in getting the truth generally accepted;

and there has been so much confirmation of it since 1835 that probably no one will now dream of contesting it. At present Russia and Turkey are the only absolute monarchies in Europe, and it seems impossible that they should long retain their exceptional positions. There is nowhere visible on the earth in our day any power capable of resisting or crushing democracy. If there be none such it does not follow that it will not be arrested in its progress; but it follows that it will only be arrested *by itself.*

That it may be thus arrested De Tocqueville saw; that it would be thus arrested he feared. While sensible of its merits he was also aware of its defects, and keenly alive to its dangers. While he recognised that it might possibly be the best of all governments, he also recognised that it could easily be the worst, and that it was the most difficult either to make or to keep good. The chief aim of his work, indeed, was to demonstrate that democracy was in imminent peril of issuing in despotism; and that the more thoroughly the democratic spirit did its work in levelling and destroying social inequalities and distinctions, just so much the less resistance would the establishment of despotism encounter, while at the same time so much the more grievous would be its consequences. As regards France, his gloomiest forebodings were realised. She had shown, by the Revolution of July 1830, that she would submit neither to autocratic nor to aristocratic government; and in 1835 she was chafing under plutocratic rule, rapidly becoming more democratic, and getting largely imbued with the socialistic spirit which insists not only on equality of rights but on equality of conditions. The Guizot Ministry (1840-48), by blindly and obstinately refusing to grant the most manifestly just and reasonable demands for electoral reform, greatly contributed to augment the strength and violence of the democratic movement, until at length it overthrew the monarchy, and raised up a republic, one of the first acts of which was to decree universal suffrage. But in 1852 the workmen and peasants of France made use of their votes to confer absolute power on the author of a shameful and sanguinary *coup d'état;* and Cæsarism was acclaimed by 7,482,863 Ayes as against 238,582 Noes. There could be no more striking exemplification or impressive warning

of the liability of democracy to cast itself beneath the feet of despotism. Yet history, so far as it has gone since De Tocqueville wrote, has not, on the whole, shown that democracy is more than liable thus to err; has not tended to prove that it must necessarily or will certainly thus err. For the last twenty years France has been organising herself as a democracy according to the principles of constitutional liberty. America, even while passing through a great war, gave not the slightest intimations of desire for a Cæsar. Instead of there being less there is far more inequality of conditions in the United States today than there was in 1835. In no other country, in fact, have such inequalities of wealth been developed during the last half-century; and inequality of wealth necessarily brings with it other kinds of inequality. In no country is the establishment of a despotism so improbable. It should be observed, however, that the only way in which we can conceive of such an event being brought about is one which would be in accordance with De Tocqueville's theory. Let the conflict between labour and capital in America proceed until the labourers attempt to employ their political power in the expropriation of the capitalists; let the democracy of America become predominantly socialistic, in the sense of being bent on attaining the equality which requires the sacrifice of justice and of liberty; and there will happen in America what happened about two thousand years ago, in the greatest republic of the ancient world, a Cæsar will be called for and a Cæsar will appear, and democracy will be controlled by despotism.

'L'Ancien Régime et la Révolution,' owing to the death of its gifted author, was left incomplete. The differences between French society before and after the Revolution are not brought out in it, nor are their causes. The influence of the literary men of the eighteenth century on opinions and events is passed over unestimated. Still the work accomplished much, although not all that it sought to accomplish. It investigated the causes of the catastrophe which cast to the ground the old French monarchy, in a manner far more sifting and trustworthy than had previously been displayed. The inductions it contained were based on the most laborious and conscientious study of original testimonies, the accounts and correspondence of in-

tendants, parochial registers, parliamentary decisions, and contemporary memoirs. It was the least declamatory, and yet the most terrible, exposure of the incompetency and oppressiveness of the monarchy which had appeared, as well as the most convincing demonstration that the Revolution had left essentially unaltered far more of the governmental system of the monarchy than was supposed. It showed that while the fall of the monarchy was the natural consequence of its faults, the Revolution had affected the course of the development of French history much less than was believed, and much less than was to have been desired. It showed, in particular, the absurdity of attributing to the Revolution the administrative centralisation of France; and, at the same time, the folly of the promoters of the Revolution in maintaining centralisation while desirous of fostering liberty.

VI.

We shall conclude this chapter with Barchou de Penhoën (1801-57), one of the few French writers who have attempted to treat of the philosophy of history as a whole. He attained considerable eminence in general literature, and was a member of the French Academy. His mind being of a naturally imaginative and speculative cast, found a special satisfaction in the study of German idealism. Besides special labours on Fichte and Schelling, he published an 'Histoire de la philosophie allemande depuis Leibnitz jusqu'à Hegel' (2 vols., 1836). In 1849 he sat in the National Assembly as a Catholic and Legitimist; but his Catholicism and Legitimism were both of a very broad and liberal kind. He protested against the *coup d'état*. His most ambitious work is the 'Essai d'une philosophie de l'histoire' (2 tom., 1854). It is characterised by literary grace, poetical feeling, moral elevation, and considerable philosophical originality. As to the order and nature of its contents, the following remarks may suffice.

It begins with the Absolute, with necessary Being, with God. He is the source and the end of all; everywhere present; essentially self-conscious; infinitely and eternally operative. In the

divine nature there is an intellectual evolution so far explicable by the evolution of human thought; the birth of an ideal world which is also a real world. God manifests Himself in the universe. Time, space, and matter are *forms* of the divine activity; time of its *successivity*, space of its *simultaneity*, and matter of their combination, as it partakes alike of the mobility of time and the immobility of space. Primitive matter is the ether. With it the material creation starts, and from it it is evolved; in it the imponderable fluids originate; out of it arise, under the influence of causes as yet unknown to us, the solar and planetary bodies. In space the universe is infinite; in time it is a continuous evolution. Being the expression of the thought and of the activity of God, it has no limit either in extension or duration. Our earth has not a definite relation to it as a drop of water has to the ocean; for while the ocean is finite and contains a finite number of drops, the universe is infinite and comprises an infinity of worlds which arise and perish, coexist with or succeed one another, in infinite series.[1]

M. Barchou proceeds to trace the general course of cosmical, geological, and especially biological evolution. He denies the fixity of species. He affirms that life has always and everywhere existed, instead of originating in a particular spot at a particular date. He believes in spontaneous generation so far as consistent with the universality and eternity of life. And he decidedly maintains transformism, although admitting that it must have taken place not by insensible gradations, but "by leaps."[2]

He next takes up historical development. Man, he contends, must have arrived on earth not as a child but as a complete man. Society was not invented by men but constituted by them. The hypothesis of Rousseau and other eighteenth-century philosophers which assign to society, religion, and language, an intentional or artificial origin, are baseless; these things are the products of nature and spontaneity, not of chance or reflection. Man is endowed with a threefold life, which has revealed itself, first, in speech, religion, and association; next, in the relations of peace and war between peoples; and, further, in the struggle with nature. There is a continuous evolution of

[1] Essai, t. i. 1-31.

[2] T. i. 35-81.

the threefold life of humanity towards perfection; and this evolution is the substance of history, and the immediate object of the philosophy of history.[1]

In delineating the first stage of history, *le monde primitif*, our author follows Vico and Ballanche, and represents the earliest societies as having been ruled and organised by divine dynasties, by inspired legislators. The *reign of the gods*, he argues, was a universal fact, rendered necessary by the very constitution of human intelligence. No other rational account, he maintains, can be given of the origins of religion, industry, science, and art.[2]

According to Barchou the life of each people is presided over by a distinctive fundamental idea. Thus China, India, and Persia represent three phases or elements of oriental civilisation. In the lives of all three the idea of the Divine is dominant; but in China its power is seen in the annihilation of personality, in India in the separation of social functions, and in Persia in religious proselytism. Persia was the link between the East and West, and the commencement of universal history.[3]

The other stages of universal history are the Hellenic world, the Roman world, the Barbarian world, the Feudal world, the world of the Renaissance, and the Modern world. To each of these M. Barchou devotes a book. All this portion of his work is excellent. Each world has obviously been carefully and impartially studied; has obviously been made the subject of prolonged inquiry and reflection. It has, further, been allowed naturally and slowly to disclose its own character and significance. It has not been interpreted by means of extraneous and alien principles or in favour of preconceived opinions; and it is vividly, accurately, and artistically delineated. In a word, the books referred to bring before us a succession of luminous, faithful, and effective pictures, full of interest and instruction, of attractiveness and suggestiveness. They are at once truly historical and truly philosophical.[4]

From them we are led to the consideration of a world in

[1] Essai, t. i. 85-136.
[2] T. i. 139-203.
[3] T. i. 207-294.
[4] T. i. 299; t. ii. 372.

which there are as yet no facts, and consequently no data for inductions. In treating of this, the world of the future, M. Barchou necessarily proceeds deductively, and arrives only at vague and uncertain conclusions. Seeing in the development of society from the dawn of history to the present time the realisation of individuality, he regards it as the germ of the societies of the future, the forms and conditions of which are still unknown. New hierarchies, new distributions of social functions, will arise. The work of society will be chiefly accomplished by association; it will be an exploitation in common which becomes more and more detached from possession. Wealth will be completely mobilised; the war between labour and capital will cease; competition will give place to harmony; nature will be rendered entirely docile to the will of man; and the peoples of the earth will be united in the same faith and participant in the same civilisation. The unity of the future will be far richer and more comprehensive than that of the middle age. Christianity will reign in the world far more powerfully than it has ever yet done. The kingdom of God on earth will fully come.[1]

But our thoughts and expectations should not be confined to the earth. Man is related to the entire universe. The terrestrial globe is only a portion of the universe, and far even from being either its centre or crown. There is life in the rest of the universe as well as on earth. Humanity is only the fragment of the immense system of animated creation on and beyond the earth. Evolution, the general law of nature, will not stop at the present order of things, or come to a close with the earth. There are forces in operation which will bring the planetary and solar bodies into collision and form vaster masses, an endless series of mightier worlds, each with their appropriate types of inhabitants. Beyond the universal resurrection of which Christianity speaks, on other earths and under other heavens, mankind will accomplish other social functions in the kingdom of God. Life and reason, the universe and humanity, are ever rising upwards, ever drawing nearer to the Eternal.[2]

In the historical philosophy of Barchou de Penhoën it is easy

[1] Essai, t. ii. 375-444. [2] T. ii. 447-478.

to distinguish what must be referred to historical generalisation from what has had its source in Christian faith, socialistic convictions, and sympathy with socialism and evolutionism, German transcendentalism and French spiritualism.[1]

[1] M. Reneé Lavollée is the author of a work which bears two titles, 'La morale dans l'histoire: étude sur les principaux systèmes de philosophie de l'histoire depuis l'antiquité jusqu'a nos jours,' 1892. The former title is altogether inappropriate. After devoting sixty pages to a general view of the historical theories promulgated in antiquity, the middle ages, and the period of the renaissance, M. Lavollée treats of those of modern times in three books. In the first of these books he expounds the views of Bossuet and Leibniz on history; in the second, those of Vico, Montesquieu, Voltaire and Rousseau, Turgot, Herder, and Condorcet; and in the third, those of the Catholic school, and of what he calls "the German school" and "the Contemporary school." His knowledge of the history which he has undertaken to trace is obviously inadequate. One page is all that he assigns to Auguste Comte; and Fr. Schlegel is set before us by him as the representative of historical philosophy in Germany during the nineteenth century. At the same time his book is written in an agreeable style, and is substantial and satisfactory in most of its parts. Its faults are chiefly of omission. M. Lavollée thinks that four great laws have been discovered and formulated by the philosophy of history: "the absence of chance in the concatenation of facts; the unity of the human race; the continuity of events and of beings; and the perfectibility of man and the continuous progress to which history testifies," pp. 382, 383.

CHAPTER IX.

THE DEMOCRATIC HISTORICAL SCHOOL.

I.

FRANCE has become a democratic country within a comparatively short period. For many ages it was ruled by princes almost or entirely independent of the kings from whom they held their fiefs. Then it was slowly transformed into the most centralised and absolute of monarchies. It was not until the eighteenth century that public spirit and national consciousness were so developed that there could properly be said to be a French people, as well as a French State. The spirit of democracy in France,—the feeling of the French people of its own unity and of its right to govern itself,—first became practically and conspicuously apparent in the Revolution of 1789. It was crushed and flattered, used and abused, by Buonaparte. It had under the reign of Charles X. distinguished representatives,—a man like Lafayette, orators like Foy and Manuel, a publicist like Carrel, poets like Béranger and Delavigne, and an historian like Sismondi. Under Louis Philippe these multiplied into a host. One of the first acts of the Provisional Government of 1848 was to decree universal suffrage; and neither the Second Empire nor any of the Governments which have succeeded it, has ventured to revoke or restrict the right thus conferred, although it is only since the re-establishment of the Republic that there has been full freedom in exercising the right. At the present day no European country is more democratic than France.

In this chapter I shall endeavour to show how history has been exhibited and interpreted by some of the advocates of

democracy most distinguished for historical insight. In doing so I shall refer, so far as is necessary, to the theories of those who have sought to defend by historical considerations the cause either of imperialism or of aristocracy, and to discredit that of democracy.

Democracy had two fearless, zealous, and brilliant champions in Jules Michelet and Edgar Quinet. The name of either can hardly be pronounced without recalling that of the other, as for half a century they were close companions in arms, and intimately bound to each other by joy, sorrow, and labour, the same triumphs and defeats, the same convictions and hopes. Their lives were so associated that death could not separate their memories.

M. Michelet was born at Paris in 1798. His parents were poor, and he was inured in youth to privation and labour; but they were too noble to sacrifice his future to their own interests, and so he was sent to the Lyceum instead of being apprenticed to a trade. He showed extraordinary aptitude for study. At the age of twenty-three he was appointed a professor of history and philosophy in the College Rollin, and began to display that marvellous power of influencing and impassioning youth which he afterwards exercised in more conspicuous positions.

His first important publications appeared in 1827. One of them was merely a summary and the other only a translation. But the summary, 'Précis d'histoire moderne,' was one which only a true historian of exceptional knowledge and still more exceptional insight, a man of genius with the powers of a great literary artist, could have made. And the translation was still more important. By his 'Principes de la philosophie de l'histoire, traduites de la Scienza Nuova de Vico,' Michelet may almost be said to have made the great Neapolitan philosopher known to France, and, indeed, helped considerably to make him known to all the rest of Europe, Italy excepted. The dissertation prefixed to the volume gave a decidedly truer estimate of Vico's position in the history of speculation, of his merits and services, than had ever been given before.[1]

[1] "Michelet," I have elsewhere said, "most wisely renounced the idea of a

The mind of M. Michelet was naturally much influenced by his study of the 'Scienza Nuova,' one of the profoundest, greatest of books,—the philosophical complement of Dante's 'Divina Commedia.' "I am born," he said, "of Virgil and of Vico." Vico taught him that divine ideas are manifested through human actions; that the providence of God permeates the world of nations; that the idea of God is the productive and conservative principle of civilisation; that as is the religion of a community, so will be, in the main, its morals, its laws, its general history: and all such truth as this he eagerly imbibed, notwithstanding that he had drunk, even too deeply, of the wine of Voltaire.

He presented his work on Vico to Cousin; and it was at the house of Cousin that he first met Quinet, who, by a curious coincidence, had shortly before presented to the chief of the eclectic school a translation of Herder's 'Ideas towards a Philosophy of the History of Mankind.' They were drawn to each other at once as by a moral magnetism. They had already become engrossed in the same subjects, and were dealing with them in the same spirit. Their principles, their aspirations, their intellectual interests, their moral sympathies, their tastes, were in full accordance. While both were men of genius and of strong will, finely cultured, widely learned, poetical, imaginative, of delicate emotional susceptibility, and ardently patriotic, yet the gifts of each were so distinct, the individuality of each so marked, that rivalry between them was impossible.

The philosophy of Vico is a generalisation of the history of Rome; and hence the student of Vico must have the history of Rome always before his mind. Not unnaturally, therefore, we find Michelet visiting Rome in 1830, and publishing in 1831 an 'Histoire romaine.' It is a work in which inaccuracies are not difficult to discover; yet one which shows a great power of divination and peculiar charms of style. In the same year

literal rendering, and applied himself to reproduce with faithfulness and vividness the substance and spirit of his author. He so succeeded that the great majority even of persons capable of reading the original will find it much more profitable to read his translation, itself a work of genius. It has its defects and inaccuracies, but to emphasise these (as many critics have done) is not only ungenerous but unjust."—'Vico,' p. 230.

appeared his 'Introduction a l'histoire universelle.' It is the work of his which has most interest for us in our present research; and I shall soon return to it.

In 1833 he began the publication of the *magnum opus* of his life, his 'Histoire de France.' In the following year, Guizot appointed him his substitute in the Chair of History at the Faculté des Lettres. At this time, and for several years after, his mind was much under the influence of Guizot's historical views. He speaks of him as his "illustrious master and friend"; he it was, he says in the preface (of 1833) to the 'History of France,' who taught him to "trace the course of ideas underneath the course of events"; he it was, he says in his Inaugural Discourse at the Sorbonne, who, "freeing science from all ephemeral passions, all partiality, all falsehood of matter and style, raised history to the dignity of law"[1] In 1838 he was

[1] M. Michelet published in 1837 a work on which he himself set a high value, but in which there is a good deal that is of a rather whimsical character,—'Origines du droit français cherchées dans les symboles et les formules du droit universel.' It was designed to show how laws were developed by society in their earliest shape, when the processes of thought which they contain were latent in symbols, in significant imagery. Its central idea was derived from Vico, and a considerable portion of its materials from the stores of erudition of Jacob Grimm. The following passage of the preface gives a general conception of its philosophy: "There are two questions with respect to legal symbols—their *nationality* and their *age*. The latter is of difficult decision. It has been well said that there are three ages in history; the *sacred*, the *heroic*, and the *human*, or, in other words, the sacerdotal, the military, and the critical. In the first age law appears as a substance, as an immovable symbol; in the second as an act; in the third as an intention. But generally one nation expresses strongly only one of these three. Thus, among Asiatic peoples, India represents the sacred age, Persia the heroic age, and Judea the human or critical age. It is not always easy to determine to what age a symbol should be referred. One may generally recognise clearly enough a sacerdotal or heroic character; but rarely can one assign dates to symbols. Their origin was so natural and so necessary that they seemed to have existed always. Whilst they were in use they were unregarded, and as soon as they became obsolete they were forgotten. But that which renders it specially difficult to fix the age of symbols is, that such a particular symbol, such a poetic fact, which might naturally be attributed to a very ancient epoch, is discovered in modern barbarism . . . We have studied the juridical symbol under the two points of view of its age and its nationality, which diversify it infinitely. Nevertheless, whatever variety may be discovered, unity predominates. It is an imposing spectacle to find the principal legal symbols common to all countries, throughout all ages . . . Unlike the sceptic Montaigne, who so curiously ferreted out the customs of different nations to detect their moral discordancies, I have found a consentaneous harmony among them all."

appointed to the Chair of History and Morals at the College of France. The volumes of his 'History of France' appeared in regular succession till 1844 — the sixth volume, which was published in that year, closing with the reign of Louis XI. These six volumes are the most perfect portion of his historical writings. In them we find an historical philosophy on the whole sound, wedded to an art of historical painting the most wonderful, and producing a true resuscitation of the past, both in body and spirit. They are the creations of a subtle, varied, powerful imagination, working patiently on all the data which a vast erudition could supply, and under the guidance of elevated and comprehensive ideas. They are free from all traces of party bias and sectarian passion; just towards all classes and institutions of medieval France. They exhibit the life and mind of the people in each age, their hopes and anxieties, enthusiasms and sorrows, with a distinctness and vividness far superior to all former histories. If they show that their author had certain prejudices, these do not much affect the accuracy of his narrative. Generalisations so abound that many may be doubtful, but all are suggestive.

Instead of proceeding uninterruptedly with the publication of his 'History of France,' Michelet made a gigantic leap forwards from the age of Louis XI. to the French Revolution, the history of which appeared, in seven volumes, between 1847 and 1853. The reason which he himself gives for this is that he felt he could not comprehend the monarchical ages without establishing in himself the soul and faith of the people. Another reason, doubtless, was that the French Revolution had become the burning topic of the day; and still another, that he and Quinet had become engaged in a severe struggle with the priest party on the question of the freedom of university teaching, and were opposing the Revolution to Ultramontanism. The assailants, Veuillot and his coadjutors, were characteristically violent and unscrupulous in their attacks; and the assailed, not content to stand merely on the defensive, turned on their foes, and exposed their cause and aims by lectures on "The Jesuits," and "Ultramontanism" (Quinet), and on "Priests, Women, and Families" (Michelet), and kindred themes. The excitement produced was immense. The Government, repre-

sented by Guizot and Salvandy, vainly tried at first to control the storm, and then suppressed the courses of the two belligerent professors. Michelet was suspended from his office in 1847.

It was under the influence of the feelings natural to this struggle with the priests and the doctrinarian ministers of State, that, abandoning for a time the older history of France, he threw himself into the study of the French Revolution. The result was a great work, which represents the inner movement, the emotional life of the time, in a succession of pictures as remarkable, from an artistic point of view, as those in which Carlyle has represented its outward movement, its external agitation. The whole soul of the author is in it. It glows through every page. Of all histories of the Revolution, Michelet's is the warmest and most animated, the most engrossing and exciting. Yet it lacks order, comprehensiveness, and evidence ; does not give a continuous and full account of the facts, and rarely indicates proofs even where they are most needed. Although no one doubts that it was preceded by an eager and laborious investigation of the sources, it contains numerous inaccuracies. In every volume there are not only the most masterly pictures, flashes of insight which certify their own truth, keen and fine psychological observations, and all the marks of a rare genius and a rich humanity, but also numerous and manifest traces of caprice, of morbid susceptibility, and of prejudice. The unquestionable sincerity of Michelet did not prevent his showing himself in this work lamentably unjust. His hatred of England led him into only a few erroneous judgments : his hatred of the priest caused him to take an utterly false view of the Revolution as a whole, and to represent it as essentially opposed to Christianity, and itself the appropriate object of a higher worship. Most of the prominent actors in the Revolution who did not belong to the 'Mountain' are treated by him ungenerously. The venality and other faults of Mirabeau are extenuated. The crimes of Danton are sought to be explained away, imaginary merits are assigned to him, and his faculties and character immoderately glorified. Michelet claims to have been the first to write the history of the Revolution from the point of view "not of any

party or man, the Constituents, Girondists, or Robespierre, but from that of the principal actor, the anonymous hero, the people." And there is a considerable measure of truth in the claim. Love to the people was his predominant passion, and it inspires every page of his history of the Revolution. He has continuously tried to consider the Revolution in relation to the people, and has often succeeded in this better than his predecessors had done. He has not attributed it to a party to the same extent as Lamartine attributed it to the Girondists, or identified it with a man as fully as Louis Blanc identified it with Robespierre. Nevertheless he has by no means made good his promise. He has generally conceived of and represented the people in a sectarian and partisan way; as the poor in opposition to the rich. To justify the people he has palliated the crimes of sanguinary ruffians. To personify the people he has converted into an idol the memory of the demagogue who encouraged the perpetrators of the massacres of September, who instigated the creation of the Revolutionary tribunal, and who did more even than Robespierre to transform the Revolution into the Terror.

The Revolution of 1848 restored Michelet to his professorship for a short time, but he was again silenced in 1851. After the *coup d'état* he refused to take the oaths of allegiance to Louis Napoleon, and was, in consequence, dismissed from his offices. In 1855 he resumed his 'History of France' at where he had left off, and carried it on to where his 'History of the Revolution' began, eleven volumes filling up the intervening void. These volumes show no decrease of talent. They abound in original and lucid views. Many of their pages are beautiful and precious, and even those which offend us interest us. But they also show us their author, instead of correcting his faults, persisting in them and adding to them. He continues to leave his authorities unindicated; he gives himself up still more to divinations, often baseless and fanciful; he judges persons more according to his likes and dislikes, and explains events more by referring them to trivial causes; at times even he makes very infelicitous applications of sickly and semi-prurient conceptions, akin to those which he has expounded in "L'Amour" and "La Femme."

I need not speak of Michelet's incomparable prose poems on "The Bird," "The Insect," "The Sea," and "The Mountain." His 'Bible de l'humanité,' 1865, concerns us more, yet need not detain us. Each great civilisation is regarded as a verse written by the life of a people in a universal, eternal, ever-advancing Bible, or gospel of humanity. India, Persia, Egypt, Judea, Greece, Rome, Christianity, are delineated as stages of this revelation of reason and justice; and are set before us in a series of pictures loosely strung together. Some of these pictures, as, *e.g.*, those of India, Persia, and Greece, are beautiful and moderately accurate; but none of them presuppose in their composition sustained labour or comprehensive reflection. Christianity is poorly described, and is, indeed, caricatured. The Stoic is exalted above the Christian. Men are exhorted to turn their backs on the mystic ideas which religions present to them, and to put their trust in science, industry, and moral enlightenment.

In the last years of his life Michelet was occupied with the history of France in the nineteenth century. He died on the 9th of February 1874.[1]

I return to the work in which he has presented his historical philosophy in its most general form—the 'Introduction to Universal History.' It belongs to the period of his spiritual health, when Vico and Guizot had great influence over his mind, although he had a faith in progress unknown to Vico, and democratic sympathies which Guizot never felt. It is brief, unlaboured; it touches only the summits of things, aims merely at fixing the positions which the chief nations of the world have occupied, or still occupy, in the history of humanity. When its author says that he might as well have entitled it an 'Introduction to the History of France,' because "logic and history" have proved to him that his "glorious country is henceforth the pilot of the vessel of humanity," and assures us that patriotism has had no share in his reaching this conclusion, we can only smile at his *naïveté*, and suggest that France may find quite enough to do in steering her own bark.

The point of view from which Michelet surveys universal

[1] Michelet, 'Ma Jeunesse'; Gabriel Monod, 'Jules Michelet,' 1875; Jules Simon, 'Notice historique sur M. Michelet,' 1877.

history had been previously occupied by Hegel. What he sees is in great part what Hegel had seen, as it is in great part what every eye must see which looks from the same position. Whether or not he borrowed from Hegel I cannot venture to determine. His book appeared in the year in which Hegel died; but at that date Hegel's views on the course of history were only known to the public by a very brief and dry summary of them in his 'Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts,' published in 1821. If we compare Michelet's essay with that summary we must fail, I believe, to find in any sentence of the former a reflection or echo of any expression in the latter. And we cannot reasonably compare it with any of the works in which Hegel's views on history were more fully expounded, as these were all posthumous publications. His 'Philosophie der Geschichte' first appeared in 1837.

The real inspirer of Michelet with the conception that history is the progressive development of freedom was very probably his friend Quinet, to whom it had occurred when occupied with the translation of Herder, as being a fundamental truth overlooked by that author. In the 'Introduction' to his translation, published in 1825 (*i.e.*, four years later than Hegel's 'Philosophie des Rechts,' and six years earlier than Michelet's essay), Quinet gave eloquent expression to his opinion that Herder required to be thus corrected; and that, to use his own words, "History is, from beginning to end, the drama of liberty, the protest of the human race against the world which enchains it, the triumph of the infinite over the finite, the freedom of the spirit, the reign of the soul." This view Quinet certainly did not derive from a knowledge of Hegel, but from dissatisfaction with Herder. As he had it, however, and expressed it with the utmost clearness, at the date mentioned, there seems to be no reason for supposing that Michelet got it from any one else. Hegel must be credited with the priority of conception; but there is no warrant for regarding Quinet or Michelet as indebted to him for the conception.

At the outset of the work now under consideration, Michelet declares history to be the story of the interminable war between man and nature, between the spirit and matter, liberty and fatality. He laments that the doctrine of fatalism is taking

possession of science, philosophy, and history.[1] Pronouncing that doctrine pernicious in history as elsewhere, he undertakes to show that, notwithstanding many appearances to the contrary, history is the progressive triumph of liberty. Nature, he says, remains always the same, but man changes for the better. The Alps have not increased, but we have made a path across the Simplon. The winds and waves are as capricious as ever, but steam has rendered us independent of their caprices. If, following the course of the sun and the magnetic currents, we proceed from east to west, from India to France, the fatal power of nature will be found showing itself less at each station.

Michelet starts with India, and describes man as there utterly overpowered by nature—as like a feeble child on its mother's breast, alternately spoiled and beaten, and intoxicated rather than nourished by a milk too strong and stimulating for it.[2] He passes onwards to show us Persia as the country in which liberty commences to manifest itself in fatality. The Persian discards with hatred the Hindu multiplicity of gods, and takes refuge in the thought of a divine power of pure and intellectual light which will eventually conquer the principle of darkness and matter. The next stage is Egypt. The very soil of Egypt is the gift of the Nile, and the Egyptian necessarily felt himself entirely dependent on nature, yet, thanks to his faith in the immortality of the soul, he did not wholly sacrifice to it his personality; the aspirations crushed in this world betook themselves to another. Human liberty next pursues its course from Egypt to Judea—which is placed

[1] In a note he expressly exempts Guizot from the reproach of favouring the belief in historical fatalism. He afterwards concurred with Quinet in representing him as specially censurable on this ground.

[2] Michelet is like Hegel in following the course of the sun, but unlike him in starting with India instead of China. But why, we naturally ask, pass over China, which is still farther east than India? Is it not because man is less enslaved in China than in India, less the victim either of superstition or of despotism? If so, the course of history fails at its very outset to coincide with the course of the sun. We naturally ask also, Why should the course of history coincide with the course of the sun? How comes it that freedom should follow the same path with an object the movement of which is mechanically necessitated? Is freedom, then, but an appearance, and really subject to fatality? How is it that there is even an appearance of such subjection? Michelet gives no answer to these questions.

in the East only to curse it and all its creeds in the name of unity and the spirit. Among the Jews nature is dethroned in the sphere of religion, and God is recognised as apart from and above nature.[1]

Proceeding with his argument, our author points out that Asia is a comparatively uniform mass: that Europe is vastly more articulated; that it is consequently more perfectly organised; and that it shows its superiority by a higher development of freedom. He compares and contrasts Greece and Rome with Asia and with each other. Much as both did—beautiful as was the one, and sublime and strong as was the other—they left the arts of peace to the conquered and enslaved, and so that victory of man over nature which is called industry was pursued by them but a little way. Rome dreamed that she had subdued the world and succeeded in building up a universal and eternal city; but the slave, the barbarian, and the Christian protested each in their own way that she was deceived, and each in their own way contributed to destroy the delusive unity which bore her name. While she dreamed, her physical and moral dissolution hastened on; Greece and Asia, whom she had vanquished by her arms, invaded and conquered her by their beliefs. Among the religions which reached her from Asia was one profoundly different from the rest; one which immolated the flesh and glorified the spirit, while the others immersed and defiled man in matter. It—Christianity—is still the only refuge of a religious soul. "L'autel a perdu ses honneurs, l'humanité s'en éloigne peu à peu; mais, je vous en prie, oh! dites-le moi, si vous le savez, s'est-il élevé un autre autel?"

After referring to the barbarian invasions, the kingdom of Charlemagne, the Crusades, the medieval organisation of the Church or empire of the spirit, and of the State or empire of force, and affirming that the Me, liberty, the heroic principle of the world, has slowly but gradually triumphed, as is evident alike in science, religion, and industry, Michelet proceeds to

[1] Michelet wisely overlooks the fact that Judea is not situated to the west of Egypt. He wisely lets go consistency, and so escapes erring like Hegel, who, rather than allow that freedom could run in any other than a straight line, made Palestine an appendage of Persia.

show what part the political persons named Germany, Italy, England, and France, have taken in the enfranchisement of the human race. This is much the most carefully executed portion of his work, and it is illustrated and supplemented by very interesting notes.

He starts with the thought that Europe is a complex organism, of which the unity, soul, and life are not in this or that part, but in the disposition or relationship and interaction of its parts, so that any one part, any one of its peoples, is only to be understood through the others. Then he delineates the character of Germany as it has expressed itself in history, literature, and manners. The renunciation of self, the devotion of man to man and of man to woman, sympathy, indecision, mysticism, pantheism,—these are, he thinks, its chief features. Germany is "the India of Europe, vast, vague, unsettled, prolific, like the pantheistic Proteus, its god."

The Italian genius he regards as forming in almost all respects a contrast to the German; as not less strongly and persistently individual and independent than the other is soft and easily disciplined. The Italian cannot consent to sacrifice his personality even to God, and much less to man; he is capable of the highest devotion to a definite cause or interest, but not to an individual, nor in the service of a vague idea or feeling. He is the man of the city, not of the family, or tribe, or country. Politics, jurisprudence, art of the kind which is passionate yet severe, are the departments in which he excels. Michelet insists strongly on the perpetuity of the Italian character, its essential identity in ancient and modern times. He maintains that the German influence on it has been but external and superficial; and that the inhabitants of the different districts of Italy still display the same peculiarities of talent and disposition by which they were distinguished in the days of the Roman Republic.

In Germany and Italy, he goes on to say, fatality is still strong; moral freedom is still borne down by the powerful influences of race, locality, and climate; in both, races and ideas are imperfectly or unequally mixed. The civilisation which is the least simple and natural, the most complex and artificial, the most European, the most human and free, is that

of France. France is much more a person than Germany or Italy, better organised, greatly more centralised,—indeed, France only has a true centre and head. French genius is essentially social and active; its bent is towards war, politics, argument. What it seeks in war is not selfish gain but proselytism, the assimilation of intelligences, the conquest of wills. In literature it displays itself to most advantage in rhetoric and eloquence; it is unequalled in prose, but deficient in poetical feeling. The spirit of the French people is profoundly democratic, and has always been so in a large measure.

England is the antithesis of France, and explains France by contrast. England is "human pride personified in a people." Its pride punishes itself by internal self-contradiction, the antagonism of feudalism and industry, two powers which agree only in an insatiable thirst for gain that leads to life-weariness and despair. The Satanic school is the most representative phase of English literature. The English genius is aristocratic and heroic. England entered first among modern nations into the field in the struggle for liberty, but has no real love of liberty. It wishes liberty without equality, which is a selfish and impious liberty; whereas France seeks liberty with equality, which is alone a just and sacred liberty. It is France, therefore, which must inaugurate the coming era of a new unity, which will this time be a free unity. Every solution either of social or intellectual problems is sterile and unsuccessful until it has been interpreted, translated, and popularised by France. France is *the word* of Europe as Greece was of Asia.

Perhaps few of these positions as to Germany, Italy, England, and France are wholly true; probably a considerable number of them are not far from being wholly false. Yet if they had been all true, if Michelet's whole book had been irreproachable both in its reasonings and facts, we would obviously not have had a science of history before us, but only an account of a single aspect of history, of one phase of its development. Even that aspect or phase is merely described, not explained. We are told that liberty has progressed from age to age; that nation after nation has contributed more or less to its growth: we are not shown the course of causation through

which, in each age and nation, the result has been brought about. A line of thought is run through history just sufficient to connect the principal States which have risen and fallen with the lapse of time, and the general truth is established that all the arts of oppression have ever been found insufficient permanently to prevent the advance of liberty. This is a high and consoling truth; one, it may well be, than which history can show us none nobler or more precious; but it wants the precision of a scientific law, and is certainly insufficient of itself to constitute a science. History shows us a progressive realisation of freedom. It does not follow that history *is* the realisation of freedom—that and nothing more. In the progressive realisation of freedom there may be an historical truth, yet not the whole truth of history, not the definition of history. Growth in freedom is only one of several facts all equally essential to humanity and its development. Truth, beauty, and morality can no more be resolved into freedom than freedom into any of them. Yet they belong no less than it to the substance of mind, and their evolution belongs no less than its to the substance of history.

II.

Edgar Quinet was born at Bourg in 1803.[1] His father, a firm republican, devoted to scientific research, just, independent, and austere in character, was an army commissioner under the Republic and during the early years of the Empire. His mother, born near Geneva, a Protestant but of most catholic spirit, and a woman of clear cultured intelligence and of rare sweetness and richness of disposition, was the centre of her son's affections, and the light and inspiration of his early life.

[1] The student of Quinet should consult, in addition to the works which I have brought under review, M. Quinet's 'Histoire de mes idées,' 'Correspondence: Lettres à sa mère,' and 'Lettres d'exil'; Madame Quinet's 'Mémoires d'exil,' and 'Paris, Journal du Siége'; C. L. Chassin's 'Edgar Quinet, sa vie et son œuvre,' 1859; Richard Heath's 'Edgar Quinet, His Early Life and Writings,' 1881; and Prof. Dowden's 'Studies in Literature,' 1883. It would be a valuable contribution to our literature if Mr Heath were to give us 'Edgar Quinet, His Later Life and Writings,' as no one has treated of Quinet with more knowledge, insight, and sympathy than he has done.

Both parents hated Napoleon, and refrained from even mentioning his name, yet their boy soon became one of his idolaters. It was only with a painful struggle, after he had reached middle life and contributed to create and spread the Napoleonic legend, that he was able to emancipate himself from the tyranny which the memory of the Conqueror exercised over his imagination. He was educated at Charolles, Bourg, Lyons, and Paris. He early began to cultivate poetry, history, and philosophy ; to study diligently many subjects ; to read the best books in various languages ; and to form literary projects. As he began, so he continued. His whole life was a course of self-education, carried on through meditation, the study of books, the close observation of events, and foreign travel. His pen was seldom at rest, and its products were very varied—poems, political pamphlets, histories, impressions of travel, philosophical and theological disquisitions, &c.

In 1823 an English translation of Herder's 'Philosophy of the History of Humanity' fell into Quinet's hands. It led him to learn German, and to translate the work of Herder into French. This translation (1825-27), prefaced by an able Introduction, was his first publication of importance. In 1827-28 he was in Germany, and deeply immersed in the study of German philosophy, literature, and art, intimate with Creutzer, occupied with Schelling, and enthusiastic over Tieck. When at Heidelberg in 1827 he published an 'Essai sur les œuvres de Herder.' As this 'Essai' and the 'Introduction à la philosophie de l'histoire,' not only show us how thoroughly he had adopted and assimilated what was true in Herder, but exhibit to us his own historical philosophy in a general form and at its earliest stage, they demand from us special attention.

Quinet may almost be said to have found himself in Herder ; to have had himself revealed to himself by Herder's book as in a mirror. Herder is in some measure at the bottom of all that he has attempted and accomplished. He accepted Herder's central thoughts as his principles, Herder's aims as his own purposes. He thus came to the study of history with the same comprehensive conception as Herder of man's relation to nature and of humanity in itself, and with the same catholic spirit. Almost all that is true in Herder is presupposed in Quinet.

But there was a weak side, an element of error, in Herder. He was right in holding that all nature is related to man, and conditional of the history of man; but wrong in that he exaggerated the power of nature over man, and left the impression that the moral world is only the product of the natural world, the laws of history simply the laws of nature manifesting themselves through a particular organism. Quinet, however, was even from the first no servile disciple of Herder, but a free critic and impartial judge as well as a disciple, and he not only never fell into this grave error, but assigned the utmost importance to its antagonistic truth. He founds on the truth which is in Herder, but at least as much on the truth which Herder overlooks. Far from regarding human history as merely natural history (*eine reine Naturgeschichte*), he insists that there is in it a something altogether peculiar and distinctive—a something nowhere found in nature, but which struggles against, subdues, and uses nature. What this something is we know and can name, because we have it within us and can feel it. It is the Will. The Will which we are conscious of in ourselves, and in virtue of which we resist the force of circumstances, the seductions and oppression of society, was also in our earliest ancestors, to render them capable of resisting the tyranny of physical nature. When Cato slew himself in order to escape from a world where he could no longer be his own master, when More, and Russell, and others ascended the scaffold for a cause which they deemed worthy of their blood, their actions may have been more heroic than that of the first man who, in the exercise of his free-will, confronted unintelligent nature, and strove to determine his own future; but although different in form, these two orders of action were one in principle, alike springing from the activity of the mind itself. This internal self-activity is no prodigy which heaven creates for a day and never renews, is no special gift conferred only on highly favoured individuals, but what is most essential in man and the root of all his history. History is from beginning to end the development and display of liberty, the continuous protestation of the mind of the human race against the world which oppresses and enchains it, the process through which the soul gradually secures and realises its freedom.

Thus regarding history as the manifestation of free-will, Quinet pronounces against subjecting it to any rigid formula. Its course is not a straight line, but tortuous; instead of moving direct to its end, it has gone back upon itself a hundred times. There is, however, a general movement which is on the whole upward and onward. The Me only gradually disengages itself from the universe which surrounds it, as the sculptor only gradually disengages from his block of marble the image which originally existed merely within himself. It rejects by degrees all that is foreign to itself, all that is contrary to a complete display of its nature, to perfect freedom. It progresses in a path which is substantially a vast and unending evolution from the general to the particular.

Human personality at first diffuses itself through the immensities of space and time, animating with its own life the wandering hosts of heaven, the mighty seas, the teeming earth, the mountains, forests, and floods. In this stage of his existence—one which may be studied in India—man, embracing all, adoring all, forgetting only himself, has a cosmogony and a theogony, but no proper history. Withdrawing from the waste vagueness of the physical universe, the spirit then proceeds to confine itself in empires—Media, Persia, Egypt, Assyria—with which its existence is so bound up that it has no individual force or worth. Another step, and personality, although still half confounded with the city and borrowing thence its vigour, is seen to have gained greatly by concentration. With Greece and Rome the city is broken, and now the Me, the spirit, alone with itself, finds in itself an infinity surpassing that with which it started, the true infinity, the Christian universe. This infinite it again proceeds to divide, to analyse, seeking to explain and derive it wholly from its own self. Hence the Reformation, Cartesianism, the Revolution have been, and an unknown future will be. Humanity wanders like Ulysses from land to land, from sea to sea, from adventure to adventure, in quest of a lost home. Impelled and guided by an invisible hand and divine instincts, it never rests long content in any dwelling-place. India and China, Babylon, Palmyra, Ecbatana, Memphis, Athens, Rome, and other countries and cities, it has lodged in for some hour of its life, some

age of time; but finding in none of them what it sought, it has forsaken them one after another, and is still in search of its Ithaca.

It is a natural consequence of Quinet's attaching the importance which he does to the fact of will or personality in history, that he should strongly insist on the necessity of every man who would understand history studying his own nature. He who would comprehend the life of a hero, or of a nation, or of humanity, must seek the principles of explanation within himself. He has there the key to all history. If we would give a true basis to historic science, we must "start from the narrow sphere of the individual Me, and thence ascend, step by step, along the succession of empires and peoples, up to the hut of Evander, the tent of Jacob, and the palm-tree of Zoroaster."

In 1829, Quinet was in Greece, as member of a scientific commission sent to explore the Morea; in 1832-33 he travelled in Italy; and in 1834 he was again in Germany. Wherever he went, it was not as an ordinary sight-seer, but as an earnest and sympathetic student of nature, of historical monuments, of literature, of men and their ways. The fruits of his travels in the years indicated, and of those in later years, have not been lost to posterity. They have gone to enrich a number of admirable and important writings which have exercised a powerful influence on modern thought. The writings to which I refer have for their common aim to show the significance of nationality in itself and in relation to cosmopolitanism; to explain and delineate the spirit and characteristics of the nationalities of Europe; and to stir up in the peoples of Europe a sense both of their own rights and of their duties to one another. Nowhere else has the fraternity of nations been more sympathetically and effectively inculcated. Modern Greece, Roumania, Poland, Italy, Spain, Holland, have good reason to honour his name. His ardent patriotism was singularly free from jealousy and exclusiveness; his love of France only helped him the more fully to realise the sacredness of the independence and rights even of the weakest among the peoples.[1]

[1] No man has done more than Quinet to delineate and explain the spirit and characteristics of the nationalities of Europe. In proof it is sufficient to refer to

In 1839, Quinet became Professor of Foreign Literatures of the Faculty of Letters at Lyons; and as such delivered, during the years 1839 and 1840, a course of lectures on the Civilisations of Antiquity. It contained the materials out of which he composed his 'Génie des Religions,' published in 1841. In this work he has carefully developed an idea which he regarded as of prime importance to the right understanding of history: the idea that the fundamental and generative principle in civilisation is the religious principle; that the political form assumed by society is universally determined by its religious beliefs, and moulded on its religious institutions. He insists that what raises man above an animal subject to mere natural laws and forces, and by uniting man to man originates society, is the apprehension of divinity; that the fetich assembles around it the tribe, and a national god brings forth a nation; that religious unity founds political unity; and that all the revolutions which have taken place in the social relations of human beings have been owing to the modification of their thoughts about God. Later works—'Le Christianisme et la Révolution française,' 'Les Jésuites,' 'L'Ultramontanisme,' and 'La Révolution'—are pervaded by the same principle, and apply it to the elucidation of medieval and modern civilisation. The highest point of view from which the works of this group can be surveyed collectively, and in connection, is as an attempted demonstration of the doctrine that the idea of divinity is the root of civilisation, and the gradual apprehension of that idea the regulative principle of the history of civilisation. Quinet was not the first to avow the doctrine. It had previously found some measure of expression through Fichte, Baader, and Krause, Goerres and Steffens, Schelling and Hegel, &c. To some extent it underlay the whole teaching of the Theocratic School. It first received from Quinet, however, its adequate historical proof and illustration.

In 1841, he was transferred from Lyons to a chair of Southern Literature, instituted expressly for him at the College of France.

the following works: in vol. iv. of his 'Œuvres Complètes,' "Les Révolutions d'Italie;" in vol. v., "La Grèce moderne," "Marnix de Sainte Aldegonde," and "Fondation de la République des Provinces-Unies;" in vi., "Les Roumains," and "Allemagne et Italie;" in ix., "Mes vacances en Espagne;" and in xi., "Reveil d'un grand Peuple."

His teaching excited great enthusiasm among the students of Paris, but brought him into conflict with the clerical party and the Government. He was suspended from his office in 1845, about two years before his friend Michelet was similarly silenced. In 1848, he was among the first to enter the Tuileries, gun in hand. He was restored by the Republic to his chair, and chosen by the electors of his native district to represent them in the National Assembly. From 1848 to 1851 he laboured by speech and writing to prevent the faults committed by his own party, and to counteract the operations of anarchists and reactionists. He did what he could to prevent that wicked act, the French expedition to Rome. He foresaw the triumph of Louis Napoleon, as he had foreseen the fall of Louis Philippe. The *coup d'état* cast him into exile; and for twenty years it was his lot to suffer those pains which none but the banished patriot himself can know. Sustained, however, by a good conscience and by the perfect sympathy of the worthy companion of his life, he laboured without ceasing through all these weary years for the instruction of his countrymen and of his race.

Of the writings which he published during his exile several directly relate to the Philosophy of History. The first two requiring to be mentioned are specially occupied with the history of France. One of them is the article published in the 'Revue des Deux Mondes' (Janv. 1855) under the title "Philosophie de l'Histoire de France;" the other, 'La Révolution,' is an elaborate work, the product of ten years' labour. Both grew out of their author's meditations on the national demoralisation visible in the collapse of the Republic and the rise of the Second Empire. The review article, owing to its wider scope, has the greater claim on our attention.

It was an eloquent and impassioned protest against the dominant historical philosophy in France, as from beginning to end an affirmation of the fatalism of facts, and a denial of the claims of justice in estimating the character of national events. That philosophy is affirmed to be at once a symptom and cause of the sickness of society in France. Nations, it is said, had irretrievably fallen much more frequently through their infatuated faith in false ideas, or infatuated rejection of the truth,

than through the power of their enemies: and as France was cherishing a number of grave errors regarding her own past, she was in imminent danger, if every man who could use a pen did not come forward in defence of the simple truth which was discarded and dishonoured; if every thoughtful Frenchman were not willing to have his night of the 4th of August, and loyally sacrifice for his country his errors in history, philosophy, and science. But one of the greatest and most pernicious of these errors is an immoral historical optimism, which rests on two sophisms that have, unfortunately, come to be accepted as axioms: viz., that despotism leads to liberty, and that men always do the opposite of what they suppose they are doing.

This doctrinarian optimism M. Quinet has described as applied to the history of France, in a way which may be thus summarised. At the very commencement of French history it is found pronouncing the Gauls incapable of self-education, of self-civilisation, and vindicating their conquerors in the name of the future of France and of humanity. It teaches that it was necessary for the progress of both, that the Gauls should first be trampled under foot by the Romans, and afterwards, along with the Romans, by the Franks; that not otherwise than through violence and slavery could order and freedom be reached. In a word, it begins by justifying conquest, representing wrong as necessary, might as inherently right, and thus discrediting, as far as it can, the holy idea of justice. As it begins, so it continues. It maintains that it was most fortunate that the Albigenses and Waldenses, and other protesters against Papal and feudal tyranny, who, even in the twelfth century, proclaimed such great truths as that every believer is a priest, did not succeed, and that their ideas were effaced in blood, till the world, some generations later, was prepared for them. Thus it makes irrational any such thing as pity for the fate of the victims of Toulouse and Beziers. It maintains equally that the success of the struggles of the provinces, the communes, and the third estate, which began so early and terminated so late, would in every case have been disastrous to France; and that, in fact, France owes its very existence, and almost all its greatness and glory, to the victory of the monarchy over these opponents, the victory of unity and

despotism over liberty and self-government. When it comes to deal with the struggles which arose out of the spread of the principles of the Reformation, instead of acknowledging that France went grievously wrong in rejecting Protestantism,—that her policy with regard to the new faith, under Francis I., and Henry III., and Charles IX., and Henry IV., and Richelieu, and Louis XIV., was at once unjust and foolish, criminal and pernicious,—it pretends that the real significance of the wars of religion, and of the measures pursued relative to the Reformed, was not whether France should be Protestant or Catholic, but whether it should be feudal or monarchical; and that, as the triumph of Protestantism would have involved the victory of the nobles over the crown, and the recovery of their medieval powers and privileges, it was necessary, for the welfare of France, that Protestantism should be defeated and suppressed. Arrived at the age of Louis XIV., it salutes it with boundless enthusiasm, as the glorious consummation of all the bloodshed, and usurpations, and oppression of the centuries which preceded it, as the end which sanctified all the means which led to it, as the crowning of the edifice of centralised authority. It finds a place for the Revolution on the ground that freedom ought to be developed after authority, but justifies all the governments which followed, on the plea that they were occupied in organising those liberties which the Revolution proclaimed. From first to last, it finds that France has committed no folly, and perpetrated no wrong; that what ought to have been has always been; that the successful cause has uniformly been a just cause.

From this whole view of French history, which he regards as the official and universally accepted view—that taught in every school where French history was taught at all—Quinet dissents and protests, severely, and almost violently. France, he maintains, far from showing herself either infallible or impeccable, really erred and sinned grievously, preferred darkness to light, and sowed for herself the seeds of a vast harvest of evils, in the instances referred to, and many others, where historical doctrinarianism vindicates her conduct. And the first act of her regeneration, he declares, must be that she confess her sins and repent of the iniquities of her fathers.

An attack so direct, so sweeping, and so little conciliatory, on what was widely accepted as established historical doctrine, naturally excited considerable anger, which found vent in counter-protestation. It was not shown, however, and could not, I believe, be shown, to be other than substantially just and greatly needed. Historical optimism is an evil so subtle and seductive, that perhaps few historians in any country do not occasionally, and to some extent, yield to its influence, while it wholly masters and possesses many without their being aware that such is the case. Any historical philosophy which commits itself to an absolute or unconditional defence of social institutions as they are, which identifies the real of any given time with the rational, must be optimistic, fatalistic; must identify the real with the rational throughout all time. For the present is the necessary product of the past. The present could not have been precisely what it is had not the past been precisely what it was. The true and adequate explanation of any social fact or institution can be found only in its actual historical antecedents, and will be found there. But if we absolutely approve the end, it is absurd not to approve the means which necessarily led to it. If we accept, for example, as the best thing which could have happened to France, precisely what happened, in the early and complete triumph of the monarchy over its enemies, in the centralisation of all powers in the hand of the king, it is utterly unreasonable to regret the measures which arrested, say, the south of France in that career of national development, of independent religious thought, and independent literary activity, on which it entered so early,—or any of the other measures, however sanguinary and treacherous, by which local independence, and personal, political, and religious liberties, were crushed down and rooted out. The historian is, in fact, in all circumstances, in danger of confounding the necessary connection which he finds between institutions and their antecedents, with the moral necessity which is a moral justification, or the physical necessity which takes away moral responsibility; and the historical philosopher who sets to work with the political aims which Hegel had as regards Germany, and Guizot as regards France, leaves himself not even a chance of escape. Guizot by no means escaped

without injury, although he did not drive his bark on the rock with full sail, like Hegel or his own friend and colleague, Cousin. He did not explicitly maintain that the real world of history was just what it ought to be, but he suggested that conclusion. He did not censure the instinctive protests of conscience against triumphant wrong as "subjective fault-finding"; but the whole drift of his reasoning tended to prove that the wrong had a right to be triumphant, and that it would have been unfortunate for humanity if events had occurred in a way which would have pleased conscience better. He found each event necessary to that which had succeeded it, onwards to a state of things which he regarded with complete satisfaction, and virtually justified the entire series, on account of this necessary connection between antecedents and consequents. The accusation brought by M. Quinet against the doctrinarian philosophy of history was thus not irrelevant, not misapplied.

Where, however, was the logical error committed by doctrinarian historical philosophers? It lay in two things. The first was the accepting any actual state of society as a state of realised reason. The real in history is never the rational, but only more or less of an approximation to the rational, never identical with, but only participant in, reason. No fact, no group of facts, no social state, has that absolute goodness in virtue of which it can be regarded as an end which justifies the means absolutely necessary to attain it. We can always ask, Might society not have been better, and would it not have been better, had antecedent acts and events been better? But that is what the doctrinarians never ask. They accept a certain state of society as above criticism, as entirely conformed to the standard of reason, and then show that it was precisely what the actual past was capable of producing. Their primary assumption is erroneous. Let any state of society be critically examined, and its defects and evils will testify to what the crimes of the past have done for it. M. Guizot had no difficulty in showing that what M. Quinet, giving expression to the natural voice of human conscience, has denounced as crimes, were the steps which led to the early unification of France and the centralisation of power in the person of the monarch; and these results he was entitled to

hold had been in many respects beneficial to France, and probably the chief reasons why she so early became the leading nation in Europe; but he ought not to have overlooked as he did the debtor side of the account, the terrible price which France has already paid, and must still pay, for the glories of the monarchy and the advantages of administrative centralisation. Otherwise he could hardly have failed to perceive that France might have been much happier and stronger if her history had been quite other than it was; if the natural development of the different divisions of France had not been violently arrested; if liberty had earlier been more successful; if Protestantism had conquered as it deserved; if unification had been later, and centralisation less complete.

The second error implied in historical optimism was the failing to recognise that freedom of choice and action is compatible with necessary connection between historical phenomena. That the present is precisely what the past has made it is true; but not more true than that the men of the past had it in their power every hour so to act as would have given us a different present. We do not need to deny the connection between actions and their effects to be necessary because we hold actions to be free; and it is only actions and their effects which history shows us. Necessity runs through actual history from beginning to end, yet actual history rests on free choice from beginning to end; on choice out of many possibilities, some better and some worse. It is from ignoring this latter fact, from confining their regards solely to actuality, that so many historical philosophers have found in their systems no room for conscience.

Quinet, then, performed excellent service by insisting on the rights of conscience in relation to historical speculation. Perhaps it would not have hurt his own cause, and it would only have been just to his opponents, if he had acknowledged that his objections applied less to the substance of their historical philosophy than to assumptions associated with it. Suppose all that he has urged against the historical philosophy of Guizot, for example, to hold true, the value of that philosophy as an explanation of the actual course of events remains intact. The optimism and fatalism implied in it must go, if

Quinet be right; but these will not carry away with them any of its explanations as to how fact gave rise to fact, how social revolutions succeeded one another, in the history of France.

'La Révolution' (1865) is much less a history than a philosophical study on history. It is a remarkably able attempt to understand and judge the Revolution: to ascertain precisely what was aimed at by it; to discriminate between the good and the evil in it; to assign to its various parties and agents only what they were really responsible for; and to show why it had deplorably failed to realise the hopes in which it originated. By writers like Lamartine and Michelet the Revolution had been treated as a sort of sacred mystery and divine incarnation, an object of faith and adoration, rather than as simply an historical and human phenomenon which should be judged of conformably to the ordinary laws of historical, rational, and moral criticism. Quinet was as sincerely attached as they were to what he deemed the principles of the Revolution; but 1852 convinced him of the folly of looking at the Revolution itself through the medium of sentiment and imagination. Hence he sought in the work mentioned to exhibit it solely in the light of reality, reason, and conscience; to clear away the legends which had grown up as to Girondists and Jacobins; to unmask Mirabeau, Danton, Robespierre, and other popular heroes; and to expose the errors and crimes which had been committed, to account for them, and to trace their consequences. A book so thoroughly honest, dispelling so many illusions and shattering so many idols, necessarily gave wide offence; but it was immensely useful.

At the same time it was not without defects. Its author, holding that a political and social revolution must depend on a religious revolution, and that the principles of Roman Catholicism were irreconcilable with those of the French Revolution, was naturally led to discuss at length the ways in which the men of 1789 and 1793 dealt with the religious question. The discussion occupies two books of his work, and is the portion of it which has attracted most attention. It is ingenious, and abounds in excellent observations and suggestions; but it is inconclusive. The general finding implied is that the politi-

cians of the Revolution, even although not Protestants by conviction, should, in order to counteract and destroy Catholicism, have established Protestantism as the national religion of France. But it was surely most excusable that those of them who were not Protestants should not have seen how this could be their duty. There were more atheists and deists than Protestants among the leaders of the revolutionary movement. The former naturally sought to establish atheism (*le culte de la raison*); the latter deism (*le culte de l'Être Suprême*). They failed. If Protestants, and especially if merely pretended Protestants, had tried to establish Protestantism, they must equally have failed. The faith of a nation cannot be altered of a sudden or at will. By merely political devices no great religious changes can be effected.

Further, Quinet ignored to a regrettable extent the most obvious and powerful of all the causes of the failure of the French Revolution: the toleration and encouragement given in it to violence and crime, to brutal and sanguinary mobs, to conspirators and ruffians. None of its chiefs showed any adequate sense of the importance of law, morality, and order to society. All its parties connived at and countenanced disorders and excesses, the most hateful in themselves and the most dangerous to society, when they seemed to tend to their own political advantage. Those aspects of the Revolution on which Taine has almost exclusively dwelt, Quinet has almost entirely overlooked.

In the seventh year of his exile Quinet left Belgium, and took up his abode in Switzerland, settling at Veytaux, near Montreux and Chillon, on the Lake of Geneva. Isolated from society, he made the Alps his companions, questioned them as to their secrets, and studied the history of the earth. Nature, which "never betrays the heart that loves her," rejuvenated his spirit, invigorated his mind, and opened up to him new vistas of thought.

He soon saw that the inquiries which now engaged him were not alien to those with which he had hitherto been occupied, but intimately connected with them; and he set himself to trace out the relations between them. For ten years he was thus employed. The conclusions at which he arrived are

presented in the work which he himself calls "the ripe fruit of his life"—'La Création' (2 vols., 1870).

This work, so admirable by the simplicity of its plan, the grandeur of many of its ideas, the vividness and impressiveness of its descriptions, the serenity of its tone, and the beauties of its style, gives a synthetic view of nature and humanity as they appear in the light of modern science and of rational speculation. Its essential conception is that the history of nature enlightens that of man, and the history of man that of nature; that these two species of history exemplify the same laws, and that the sciences conversant with them must follow the same method; that, although naturalists and historians have long worked apart, without mutual recognition or understanding, indifferent or hostile, they have at length met, found themselves to have been engaged in the same task, exchanged their torches, and combined their forces; and that they will henceforth be powerful and successful in the measure that they consciously realise their alliance. To awaken, deepen, and guide this consciousness, is the main aim of the book.

The pictures of geological epochs in books III.-V. are brilliant products of a constructive imagination which had been long exercised in the sphere of history, and which submitted itself to scientific control. In order to compose them Quinet made himself thoroughly acquainted with the works of Alphonse de Candolle, Pictet de la Rive, Oswald Heer, Agassiz, Lyell, Darwin, Huxley, and other great palæontologists and naturalists. They form an appropriate and magnificent introduction to what he has to say of man, but they are not introduced solely to serve that end, and still less for their own sake: on the contrary, their chief design is to show the identity of two methods of research commonly considered distinct; and the unity of nature and history, which although long separated and contrasted, are now ascertained to be only two divisions or branches of history. The discovery by modern science of this identity and unity Quinet regards as the greatest fact of modern times; the one which must revolutionise most the realm of intellect, and effect the most momentous changes on our conceptions of the world and man, of life and death.

He entirely rejects the hypothesis of multiple creations, of

repeated interventions of supernatural power; and he fully accepts the general doctrine of transformism and development. In the book (VI.) devoted to "the Ape and Man," he indicates the differences and resemblances between them, and infers that there must have been an intermediate type which soon entirely disappeared. Once separated, however slightly, from the simian stock, man rapidly removed from it, underwent decisive consecutive changes in his principal organs, and speedily reached the final or fully human type, which has alone survived. Primitive man had scarcely time to leave his impression on the earth. Men are of one type, origin, and blood, in a sense and measure in which the apes are not. There is but one human family; there are many simian families. Millions of ages separate the origins of man and the ape. A variety of considerations are adduced to prove that the human race appeared before the great ice age; not on an island but a continent; and in a subtropical climate. Its relations to the large vertebrate animals of the quaternary and tertiary epochs, as well as such glimpses into the psychology of fossil man as the crania which have been discovered seem to give, are the subjects of ingenious and suggestive remark. Universal life is shown to concentrate itself in man alone; all the vicissitudes of its history to pass into and be continued in his; all the revolutions of the earth to have left their traces and their echoes in the human heart.

In books VII.-VIII. the man of the glacial period, the ages of the lacustrine city, and the social and religious consequences of the discovery of fire, are the chief subjects discussed.

The next book (IX.) treats of the palæontology of languages, and of the laws of life and speech. It abounds in hypotheses, not a few of which may be mere conjectures. They are always, however, of the kind necessary to scientific progress. Max Müller has argued that the science of language is not a mental (or, as the French say, moral) or historical science but a physical science. Quinet maintains that it is both a physical and historical science; and endeavours to show that comparative philology is intimately connected with comparative anatomy. In the origin, growth, and decay of languages, he sees exemplified the general laws of life. He traces language back from the

inflectional to the agglutinative, and from the agglutinative to the monosyllabic stage, and conjectures what it was on the lips of fossil man. After Buffon and Herder, and in opposition to Max Müller, he refers the origin of its primitive radicals to imitation of the voices of animals and of the sounds produced by natural agents. His chapters on the songs or languages of birds, their varieties or dialects, are at least curious and ingenious. In discussing the application of the laws of natural history to linguistic science and of those of linguistic science to natural history, he represents the monosyllable as the organic cell; compares the succession of the chief branches of human speech to that of the chief divisions of the animal kingdom; and explains the formation of such idioms as the Neo-Latin as a process of the same kind as the modification and ramification of biological species. The causes which limit the power of languages to unite in the production of other languages are akin to those which condition the fertility of races *inter se*.

The tenth and eleventh books are of special interest. Their author undertakes to establish in them, by tracing the parallelisms of nature and humanity, the principles of a new science. He claims to have entered a virgin forest, full of mysteries and of promises, and where no one had previously been. I must be content, however, to indicate merely a few of the ideas which he has set forth in this portion of his treatise.

Progress in nature and history, we are told, is not effected along a single line, but on as many parallel lines as there are organised beings and human races. It does not always proceed in the same direction or at the same rate; nor is it even continuous. There are times of relapse, aberration, and decadence. Not every new species or generation is an improvement on that which preceded it. The march of nature and humanity is less rigidly and narrowly regulated, and is nobler and freer, than is supposed. Yet the thread of organic life and of civilisation is never severed. The vital force passes from one genus or empire to another; it is circulated and transformed, not lost. When the capability of further development ceases in one genus or nation, it leaves them in a condition of immobility

akin to decline, and passes to others which spring into life, bearing in their bosoms an incommensurable future.

"Humanity is an embryo always growing, and which successively assumes diverse forms. The epochs through which it travels are marked by the peoples which there stop in their course, ceasing to advance, but not to exist. Thus they all coexist on the earth at the same time: the first beginnings among the Chinese, the age of stone among the savages, that of Egypt among the fetichists of Senegal, that of Abraham among the nomadic Arabs, &c. The diversity of epochs gives rise to the diversity of societies. Corresponding to these stages of arrest in the development of humanity are species in the development of the organic world."

Natural and human history are subject to common laws. Both, for instance, imply the law of unity of composition and correlation of parts. It is only through the practical recognition of this law that either palæontological or archæological research has been prosecuted with success. The palæontologist and the archæologist alike have often before them merely the slightest fragments of organic or social systems which have disappeared, and yet they are able to divine what these systems were. They have a sure guiding thread in the principle that every organic whole, animal or social, is of a definite type, with parts mutually dependent in their growth and development, and the characters of each part related to those of all the rest. This law was recognised and acted on by historians before it was formulated by Geoffrey Saint-Hilaire.

The law of unity of composition has its complement in the law of specialisation of functions, which also prevails in the social, as well as in the vegetable and animal, world. Indeed it was in the social world, and especially in the sphere of economics, that its working and importance were first distinctly recognised. The division of labour in industry is only an exemplification of the differentiation which is now recognised to be a law alike of natural and of human development; but it is the one which was first studied with care.

The struggle for existence, as exhibited by Darwin, is, in like manner, a generalisation of the law of social order on which Malthus had laid so much stress. It is the extension to the

whole domain of living nature of an hypothesis which had been employed to explain the economic condition of mankind.

Further, progress is not universal either in nature or history; selection does not act alike on all; it is chiefly in the higher grades or orders of being that improvement is to be observed. The simplest of living beings are the oldest. Molluscs and zoophytes are now much what they ever were. The masses of the human race have advanced little in comparison with its leading classes. It is by its head that humanity is progressive. Duration is no evidence of the superiority of a species or of a civilisation. The glory of Greece far surpasses that of China. When an empire declines, what is noblest in it is what becomes earliest atrophied: first, thought; next, art; then industry; and, finally, military power.

The phenomena of atrophy are as apparent in human societies as in the organisms of which botany and zoology treat. The law of atavism, the tendency to return to the primitive type, is also a sociological not less than a biological law. Yet nature and humanity never simply retrace their steps; never recommence their work *ab ovo*. Nature never employs again a mould which it has once broken; nor does humanity ever reinvest itself with a social form which it has once abandoned. But although the doctrine of progress has been exaggerated by historians, and requires to be corrected and brought into accordance with the teaching of naturalists, progress is the rule. A general rise of creation, a gravitation towards spirit, is traceable. The successive generations of individuals, both human and animal, work out a plan of which they have no consciousness or discernment, yet one which is an onward and upward development, a realisation of vast and lofty ends.

The problem of the origin of life itself is dealt with.[1] It is maintained that life is cosmical, not merely terrestrial; that it did not originate on the earth at a given time out of non-living matter, but that the earth carried it along with it from the mass from which it was detached. Life, it is argued, is not confined to certain points of space or periods of time, but is coextensive and coeval with the universe. The same germs

[1] xi. ch. 2.

which were in the outer layers of the primitive nebula of a solar system, may take different forms appropriate to each planet of the system. The earth has no more given itself life than it has given itself light. The first living being had its ancestor in the infinite. This theory had been previously suggested, we have seen, by Barchou de Penhoën; since it was propounded by Quinet it has been advocated by Preyer and several other scientists.

The work closes with "a prophecy of science."[1] The natural science of the present day utters, we are told, a prophecy far more remarkable than any to be found in Isaiah or Ezekiel; one which has respect not to some petty empires condemned to speedy destruction, but to all nature and to all humanity. It leaves us with the assurance that creation is unfinished, and will be completed; with the prediction that the human race will pass away, and give place to one which is higher and nobler.

Looking at the course of things in the past as disclosed by science, M. Quinet anticipates that the future will be in the same direction, and, therefore, better and more glorious than the past. It may be so; it is even a not unnatural inference that it will be so. But there is no necessity or certainty that it will not be quite otherwise. What the distant future will be, and whether the final consummation of things will be glorious or the reverse, the fulness of life or the nothingness of death, mere natural science, science detached from religious faith, has as yet assuredly not ascertained. The hope of the optimist may be less unreasonable than the despair of the pessimist; but it cannot justly claim to be vouched for by positive science.

On the fall of the Empire in 1871 Quinet hastened to Paris to encourage his countrymen and to share in their privations. He was reinstated in his Chair, and offered an indemnity for having been illegally driven from it; but he refused any recompense. While Paris was being besieged, his 'Création' was translated into German by a distinguished naturalist, Professor B. von Cotta of Freiburg; and when the siege was raised a copy of this translation was one of the first things which reached him.

[1] xii. ch. 11.

Notwithstanding failing health, and the harassing labours of a representative and legislator in a time of sore civil troubles, he continued to study and write. 'L'Esprit Nouveau,' the last of his works published in his lifetime, appeared in 1874. It completes and crowns 'La Création.' There are various matters in it worthy of being dwelt on which I must leave unconsidered: *e.g.*, his views on the place of justice in history, its relation to love, and how it is that it holds its own, and even triumphs in the struggle for existence, notwithstanding the advantages of the wicked; his explanation of the decadence of aristocracies; his remarks on the falsification of history by servility of spirit; and especially his brilliant exposition of the causes and refutation of the theories of recent pessimism.

Edgar Quinet died on the 26th of March 1875. Few have lived in any age a life so singularly unselfish, so conspicuously pure and high in aims, so earnest in endeavours, so fruitful in works, and so profoundly religious in spirit.[1]

[1] Democracy in France has had among its adherents many historical theorists besides Michelet and Quinet. I shall mention here only the following:—

1. Lamennais (during the last period of his life). He entered on this stage of his career with the 'Paroles d'un croyant,' 1833, a work written with an intensity of sympathy and passion hardly surpassed in any book of Hebrew prophecy; and he followed it up by various attacks on civil and ecclesiastical absolutism, and appeals on behalf of freedom and religious and social renovation. To the same period belongs his chief philosophical production, the 'Esquisse d'une philosophie,' 4 vols., 1840-46. It is the most speculative, the most serene and dispassionate, and the most artistically constructed of all his writings. Its first principle is Absolute and Infinite Being, and from it all knowledge and existence are represented as naturally and rationally derived. It gives evidence of earnest study, abundant ingenuity, and remarkable architectonic power; but also of lack of critical insight and caution. With all his gifts Lamennais was constitutionally incapable of being wisely sceptical. The third volume of his 'Esquisse' is the one which is of most interest to an historical student. It treats of the development of the powers of humanity, and of their manifestations. Its best chapters are those on the evolution of the various arts, and especially of architecture, sculpture, painting, poetry, and oratory. No light was thrown by Lamennais on the nature of beauty, or the psychology of our æsthetic sentiments, but he was exceptionally successful in showing how the history of art has been related to the history of religion, and to history in general.

2. Eugène Pelletan has been an ardent advocate of the democratic cause. He is, perhaps, best known by his eloquent exposition and advocacy of the theory of indefinite progress in his 'Profession de foi du xixe siècle,' 1850. His view as there set forth having been criticised in one of the 'Entretiens' of Lamartine, he defended and reiterated them in 'Le Monde marche,' 1856. Progress means, according to him, the increase of life. Its motive force is desire. He combats the ascetic theory of progress, founded on self-renunciation, and so generally

III.

The revolution of 1848, the troubles which followed, and the triumph of imperialism in 1851, greatly influenced historical thought in France. They caused the past history of France and of humanity to assume to many Frenchmen a much altered aspect. The events and personages of bygone ages were viewed through the media of the experiences and feelings of the actual time; and the consequence was in not a few cases an entire change of opinion as to their character and significance. One result was the spread of distrust in democracy, and in democratic interpretations of history—*i.e.*, in such readings of it as conclude in favour of the self-government of nations and the rightful liberty of individuals. Absolute rule found a larger number of admirers. Some openly proclaimed force to be the law of society. There came forward authors who sought to convert all history into an apology for Cæsarism. They represented the

approved by the Church. At the same time, he rests his own doctrine on faith in God and immortality. As God is the source of all, man tends continually to approach Him. And God through His various attributes is continually expanding His empire in time; continually building up that divine kingdom of which the best formula is Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity. While not a mechanical evolutionist or transformist, he maintains that progress is continuous and unending. Life continuously ascends from the fluid to the mineral, from the mineral to the vegetable, from the vegetable to the animal, and from the animal to man, the final term of life; but human life is immortal, and will have infinite space for its place of pilgrimage. "Man will go always from sun to sun, ever mounting, as on Jacob's ladder, the hierarchy of existence" ('Prof. de foi,' 376, 3e éd.)

3. Lamartine. In opposition to Pelletan, he took a desponding view of the future of humanity, and doubted if faith in moral progress could justify itself before reason and history. His 'Histoire des Girondins,' 1847, originated in zeal for the spread of democratic ideas and aspirations. No book had a greater immediate popularity and influence; but it was nearly all that an historical work should *not* be.

4. Victor Hugo. It seems to me that in the ancient world there were two poets whose thoughts on the order and course of human affairs might, without irrelevancy, be treated of at length in a history of the philosophy of history—namely, the author of the Book of Job and Æschylus; and that in the modern world there have been three, Dante, Shakespeare, and Victor Hugo. As in Dante the 'Geschichtsanschauungen' of Catholicism, and in Shakespeare those of Humanism, so in Hugo those of Democracy, have found their noblest and fullest poetical expression. I refer especially to his 'Légende des Siècles' and similar poems. To write profitably, however, of Hugo in this connection, would require an extent of space which is not at my disposal.

fortunes of mankind as dependent on a few individuals of commanding genius, in whose hands Providence places the whole force of the nations in which they appear; and they regarded opposition to the wills of these predestined "saviours" as folly and impiety.

This theory was set forth in the most outspoken and cynical fashion by M. Romieu in his 'Ère des Cæsars,' 1850. The Cæsarism advocated by him is the incarnation of sheer force; the rule of an absolute personal will which despises ideas and principles, and relies on swords and guns. It differs from monarchy precisely in that it thus subsists of itself and by itself, while the latter is maintained only on the condition of inspiring belief. The root of monarchy is a faith born in the infancy of nations, and subsequently developed and exalted into a dogma, but which dies in late and rationalistic ages. These call for strong, and not for hereditary, power. As soon as any people accepts "the insensate dogma of reason," and seeks to govern itself by free discussion and parliamentary methods, it shows that it has become insane and requires to be ruled by force in the hands of a man who substitutes deeds for words. "Force is the inevitable issue of all the debates in which words entangle nations; it is the decisive and potent corollary of every contradictory theorem engendered by the spirit of disputation—call it philosophy, reason, or liberty; it is the solution of all the problems propounded in every age by pretended reformers; it is, in a word, the *ultima ratio* of all human calculations, which can come to nothing without force. And when I say force, I mean that very force of which people complain, and of which they blame the excess."

While thus avowing his preference of force to reason and liberty, Romieu professes great respect for what he calls holiness and Christianity, and declares that he has written in their interest. "Mankind has two sorts of respect,—respect for holiness, and respect for power. The element of holiness has ceased to exist in the present age; the element of strength is of all ages, and can alone restore the other. This is why I have pleaded the cause of force in this book, which may be deemed coarse (*brutal*). . . . Christianity so completely embodies all the aspirations of the soul, that it must revive

once more, sooner or later, after the mad doctrines which have usurped its place are abandoned. If there be in the word *progress* any sense applicable to our order of ideas, it must be sought for in the rehabilitation of the most sublime of creeds. He who said, 'Blessed are they that mourn,' uttered the one great maxim of humanity. Whenever that maxim shall be universally believed, all codes, all laws may be destroyed, and the world will go on smoothly of itself."

Romieu presents us in proof of his theory with a survey of Roman history, and endeavours to make out that the European world is in the same position as the Roman world was when it found relief and rest under Augustus. His prediction, that "in 1852, if no event hurries on the catastrophe," France would freely seek salvation in the way which he recommended, showed that he possessed a considerable measure of perspicacity. It has to be remembered, however, that he was one of the band of Cæsarian conspirators who were striving to bring about the catastrophe of which he announced the approach.

M. Dubois Guchan likewise attempted, in his 'Tacite et son siècle,' 1851, to find in the history of Rome the justification of Cæsarism in France. He contrasted the Republic and the Empire to the disadvantage in almost all respects of the former; maintained that the Cæsars were not only useful but necessary men; and sought to discredit, as far as he could, the reputation of the immortal historian who had shown what Roman Cæsarism actually was. With the same aim, and with the same desire to recommend himself to the new Cæsar, the celebrated jurist M. Troplong, in his study 'Sur les fautes et les crimes qui precipitèrent la chute de la republique romaine' ('Rev. Con.,' t. xxi., xxiii., xxviii.), gave a most unfavourable view of all those who had opposed the great Julius. He showed in it a want of moral perception, an inability to distinguish right and wrong from failure and success, most deplorable in a judge and jurist.

The best book of the class under notice was the 'Histoire de Jules Cæsar' (2 vols., 1865), written by Napoleon III. himself. While not displaying great talent of any kind, it bore abundant traces of carefulness and industry, and embodied the results of special surveys and researches which the author had caused

to be made. It is undoubtedly of considerable value. It was avowedly written with the intention of proving "that when Providence raises up such men as Cæsar, Charlemagne, and Napoleon, it is to trace out to peoples the path which they ought to follow; to stamp with the seal of their genius a new epoch; and to accomplish in a few years the work of many centuries." "Happy are the peoples which comprehend and follow them! Woe to those that misunderstand and oppose them! Like the Jews, they crucify their Messiah." The personal interest of the author obviously determined his choice of this thesis; but there is nothing to complain of in the way in which he maintains it, which is ingenuous and dignified, and free from aught akin to the insolence of Romieu or the servility and spitefulness of Troplong. The admiration which he professes for Cæsar is immense, but obviously sincere, and not altogether without discrimination; and if his estimate of the character and policy of his hero may be in various respects questioned, it can at least be said for it that it is substantially identical with that of Mommsen and Froude, and not decisively disprovable. He shows himself to us as a worshipper of political genius; as a believer in fate or destiny, which he confounds with Providence; and as a vague and hazy thinker, with a tendency to speculation but no real aptitude for it.

In all the works just noticed, Roman history is treated as the norm or type of universal history; and it is compared with the history of France, in order that the Napoleons may have a place assigned them therein corresponding to that of the Cæsars in the history of Rome. There could hardly be a more superficial way of regarding history, or a feebler method of attempting to refute the historical doctrine of republican liberalism and to justify imperialism. It was, in fact, not only a logical inconsistency but a strategical blunder in the party of force and action to appeal to reason and betake itself to discussion at all. For, although it had gained possession of the will and sabre of France, it had not succeeded in appropriating her intellect and pen. With few exceptions, her eminent thinkers and distinguished writers were in the opposing camp, irreconcilably hostile to the Empire and to its principles and methods. The advocacy of Cæsarism on historical grounds in

the interests of the Empire afforded democratic publicists and historians a welcome opportunity of assailing it, and indicated how this might be done. The theory which sought its vindication in the history of Julius Cæsar could be, with more relevancy and effect, attacked through the history of Napoleon I.; and every such attack, if skilfully and vigorously conducted, could not fail to tell heavily against Napoleon III.

It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that during the reign of Napoleon III. a favourite subject of historical study among the democratic writers of France should have been Napoleon I., or that they should have scrutinised his character and action with at least no prejudice in his favour. When Napoleon III. ordered the publication of the 'Correspondance de Napoleon I.,' he rendered a great service to the cause of historical truth, but the reverse of a service to Napoleonism; he rendered easy the task of the hostile critics of the first Emperor, and impossible any moral admiration of him.[1] Of the anti-Bonapartist historical literature which appeared under the Second Empire, such studies as those of Charras, Quinet, and Littré on the campaigns of 1815, had for aim to indicate the limitations of the military genius of Napoleon, and the faults which he had committed even as a commander. The 'Napoleon et son historien, M. Thiers,' of Jules Barni, was a vigorous, severe, and effective attack both on Napoleon and on the most brilliant historian of his Consulate and Empire. The 'Histoire de Napoleon 1er' of M. Paul Lanfrey was a very able counterpart of the work of M. Thiers; not more impartial, but written under a contrary bias; and not more a perfect or definitive history, but one in which the moral side of Napoleon's life is more adequately and faithfully represented, and in which an important class of documents too much neglected by M. Thiers are utilised. It had an immense effect on public opinion.

All the works just referred to were intended to discredit the dominant Cæsarism. The 'Théorie du Progrès,' 1867, of M. de Ferron has the same aim, but is more general in its scope, and distinctively philosophical in nature. It begins with a sketch

[1] The letters in the first fifteen volumes (embracing the period from 1793 to 1809) were printed "without alteration or suppression." In the succeeding volumes were allowed to appear "only what the Emperor would have printed."

of the history of the theory of progress, in which Vico and Saint-Simon are treated with special appreciation. The doctrine of Vico is elaborately expounded. M. de Ferron combines Vico's conception that historical development has had three stages, the divine, the heroic, and the human, with Saint-Simon's conception that organic and critical periods have succeeded each other. These two generalisations, when united, seem to him to determine what is the line or course of human progress. He makes a sustained endeavour to show that they are warranted by history. Greece, Rome, France, and England are represented as having had their theocratic, aristocratic, and democratic phases, and the histories of law, art, religion, and science, as having exemplified the alternation of organic and critical epochs. Although unable to accept this composite theory, I shall not here discuss it, as I have already dealt with the conception of Saint-Simon, and hope, at the appropriate time, to examine that of Vico.

Greece and Rome not only reached a democratic stage, but they passed through it into Cæsarism. The nations of Europe either have reached, or will reach, the same stage. Can they avoid the same fate? That depends upon what organisation can be given to democracy, which again implies a knowledge of the conditions and means of progress. How has progress been brought about in the past? Has it been by authority or by freedom? M. de Ferron goes directly to history in order to discover what answer should be returned to this question. He institutes an independent investigation into the influence of the control of society by the State on progress under the Romans and in modern times, on the one hand, and into the influence of liberty in France and England, on the other. His finding is that the political lessons which have been inculcated by Madame de Staël, Benjamin Constant, M. de Tocqueville, and M. Laboulaye, in France, and by John Locke, Lord Macaulay, and J. S. Mill, in England, are alone those which history warrants; while the Cæsarists, Saint-Simon, Louis Blanc, and Thomas Carlyle, recommend us to follow a path which history abundantly proves to be one of shame and death. His argumentation is always able, and even where not decisive it is valuable. In the main, or, in other words, as a proof from facts of the

pernicious tendencies and effects of Cæsarism, it is entirely conclusive.

M. de Ferron's 'Théorie du Progrès' is, then, an excellent specimen of a legitimate combination of historical and political science, or of the application of the historical method to the confirmation of political truth. In later writings he has, with equal solidity and judiciousness, employed the same method to solve other political problems of vital importance.[1]

The deplorable aberrations of democracy in 1848 and 1871 damped and moderated a too enthusiastic faith in its promises, revealed its defects, and deepened and diffused a sense of its dangers. While not arresting the spread of democracy in France, they taught all teachable men in it that the democratic movement, like every other great social movement, carries within it terrible possibilities of evil; and that the exclusive and entire realisation of the ordinary democratic ideal of society would be neither the perfection of government nor a goal worthy of history. The results are to be seen even in literature in various forms.

For instance, it has led some sincere and thoughtful democrats to labour earnestly to give greater precision, consistency, and completeness to the democratic ideal; and especially to seek to trace the conditions—educational, industrial, political, moral, juridical, and religious—requisite to secure a gradual, peaceable, and beneficent approximation to it. This has been the origin of various interesting and instructive works; one of the ablest and most typical of the class, perhaps, being the 'Démocratie' of the eminent philosophical thinker, M. Vacherot.[2]

[1] 'Institutions municipales et provinciales comparées dans les différents États de l'Europe,' 1883. From the historical and comparative study of these institutions, M. de Ferron draws conclusions as to how they should be reformed and developed. 'De la division du pouvoir législatif en deux Chambres,' 1885. In this work we have first a lengthened historical account of the division of legislative power in antiquity, the middle age, the different countries of modern Europe, and the United States ; and next a theoretical and practical discussion of the question as to the expediency of the division, and as to the best form and method of making it. All who think either of ending or mending the House of Lords would do well to consider M. de Ferron's facts and arguments.

[2] The first edition of 'La Démocratie,' published at Paris in 1859, was seized and suppressed as treasonable and dangerous to public order. The author was sentenced by the *Tribunal correctionnel de Paris* to twelve months' imprison-

Others, again, have probed the sores and studied the diseases of contemporary democracy with a view to discover the appropriate remedies. They have sought to substitute for utopian socialistic schemes legitimate sociological generalisations based on the close and methodical investigation of facts. A powerful impulse to inquiry of this kind was given by F. Le Play through his 'Ouvriers Européens,' 1855, 'Réforme Sociale,' 1864, and 'Organisation du travail,' 1870.

Then there are those who have dealt with the history and theory of democracy in a severely critical or positively hostile spirit. The late M. Renan, under the impressions produced by the disasters of France in her last war with Germany, maintained that she owed all her greatness in the past to the monarchy, clergy, nobility, and upper portion of the third estate, and her weaknesses in the present to the predominance of a democracy aiming at equality of material advantages; and insisted that she could only renew her strength and regain her proper place among the nations by the adoption of measures of education and discipline too severe and heroic to be other than displeasing to the popular mind.[1] The volumes of M. Taine on the 'Révolution' have been extremely unpalatable reading to the host of people in France who idealise and idolise that great catastrophe. Never before had so fierce a light been thrown on the confusion, violence, and misery of the time; nor had the characters of the most typical and prominent of the revolutionists been dissected with such merciless severity. Although his work is one-sided, and not strictly a history of the Revolution, it is a brilliant study on it, an incisive and powerful criticism of it, and a valuable contribution to its psychology.

Another keen critic of democracy is the Viscount Ch. d'Ussel in his 'Essai sur l'esprit public dans l'histoire,' 1877. His work is, however, of wider scope than those of Renan and Taine, to which we have referred, and lies more within the sphere of

ment. The *Cour impériale* reduced the term of imprisonment to three months. In the second edition, published at Brussels in 1861, all the incriminated passages are left unaltered and printed in italics. The book is throughout an unimpassioned philosophical discussion.

[1] 'La Réforme intellectuelle et morale,' 1871. Compare Mazzini's profoundly interesting estimate of this work in the essay, "M. Renan and France," 'Fortnightly Review,' February 1874.

philosophy. A few words must be said regarding it. It is an attempt to delineate the fundamental and ruling common thought or social ideal of each of the chief successive phases of civilisation,—the Hebrew, Greek, Roman, medieval, modern, and contemporary phases. Its introductory observations on the origin, spread, and influence of social ideals, or, in other words, on public spirit in general, are striking and good; but the few pages which are all that are devoted to "the general laws of history" are altogether inadequate. We are told that there is "a law of community of the ideal in each society," "a law of speciality in the vocations of peoples," "a law of cycles," "a law that the military and religious spirit are powerful in prosperous epochs," and "a law that intelligence survives after the loss of the other qualities of nations"; but it is neither proved that there are such laws, nor even explained with precision what is meant by them. M. d'Ussel shows an enthusiastic admiration for the military ideal or spirit of the warrior. I can agree, in the main, with what he says, understanding him to speak of just war and of true soldierly virtue; but he might advantageously, I think, have dwelt a little on the criminality of unjust war, and on the baseness and selfishness of the motives which have so often been conspicuous in the prosecution of war. The chapter on the ideal of the Hebrews suffers from its author's obvious want of acquaintance with the history of Hebrew sacred literature. It is not permissible, in the present state of Biblical science, to assume, and reason on the assumption, that the Pentateuch was written about the sixteenth century before our era, or to quote Bishop Bossuet as an authority on any question of Old Testament criticism. The chapters on Greece and Rome are good; and those on the middle ages, modern times, and the contemporary period, are still better. They abound in just and even original views, expressed with vividness and force. But the last chapter—that on democracy—is the most interesting. The rapid growth of democracy is fully recognised, and its universal triumph regarded as not improbable. The characters common to it are attempted to be ascertained by an examination of its manifestations and effects in countries where it is dominant or becoming so,—Switzerland, the United States, South America, China,

France, and England. That there is reasonableness in its principle, the equality of individuals, and in its law, the will of the majority, is admitted; as also that it tends to good by favouring sociability, producing respect for labour, preventing oppression of the poor by the rich, and bringing the means of comfort within easier reach of all. On the other hand, it is strenuously maintained that a logical development of the democratic principle, or an exclusive endeavour to realise the democratic ideal, over-excites selfishness and the desire of material enjoyment, lowers the standard of intellect, discourages originality, independence, and genius, demoralises political leaders, and renders life mean and prosaic. Many will, perhaps, disapprove of this part of M. d'Ussel's teaching. I am not of the number. I am convinced that any absolute or exclusive democracy, or, in other words, any democracy which does not sufficiently appreciate the truth and value of the principles which theocracy, monarchy, and aristocracy erred not by honouring but by exaggerating and misapplying, will come to an ignominious end. The democracy which has so much faith in the sovereignty of the people, in the right of majorities, and in the equality of individuals, as to have none in the supremacy of the divine law, in the necessity of a strong central authority to maintain peace or conduct war, and in the justice and expediency of giving free scope to all inequalities which are not contrary to but rooted in human nature, cannot fail to have an inglorious career, and is likely to have a short one.

This chapter may be brought to a close with a glance at the 'Lois de l'histoire,' 1881, of M. Louis Benloew. The title is appropriate, for the direct and main aim of the work is to ascertain and trace the laws of historical movement. Unfortunately, it is just its chief aim, I think, which it is least successful in accomplishing. M. Benloew starts, as many others have done, with the thought that humanity is an evolution between the successive stages of which and those of the life of the individual there is an analogy, so that each great stage of history shows features like to those which characterise the chief periods of personal development. The human infant is a being in an embryonic state, in which nutrition is its chief preoccupation. But in the measure that the soul unfolds itself

it is always the more clearly seen to function through its three principal faculties—sensibility, will, and reason. These faculties imply each other, yet although coexistent are distinct, and each in its turn obtains predominance. In youth sensibility rules, in mid-life the will, and in mature age the reason. So is it with humanity. It existed at first in an embryonic state, a period of preparation, in which order was only the product of force. The stages which follow are three: the first, that of sensibility, ruled by the Ideal of the Beautiful; the second, that of will, ruled by the Ideal of the Good; and the third, that of reason, ruled by the Ideal of the True.

The embryonic or preparatory period of which M. Benloew treats, is not, as we might naturally expect it to be, the prehistoric age, one of unknown but certainly vast duration; it is only a so-called primitive age, which extended from about the year 4200 to 1200 B.C., the primitive times of Egypt and the oldest Asiatic States. The cycle of the Ideal of the Beautiful runs from B.C. 1200 to A.D. 300. Greece was its glory, the most perfect realisation of its ideal. The last 600 of the 1500 years assigned to it are represented as a time of transition to the cycle of the Good. The chief part of the work of Rome is regarded as having been the mediation of this transition. The cycle of the Good comprises also 1500 years: it stretches from A.D. 300 to A.D. 1800. The China of Confucius, Buddhism, and later Hinduism, Bactria, and Persia, are represented as having displayed *imperfect forms* of its ideal; Israel *the perfectible form;* Jesus of Nazareth *the perfect form;* and Islam *a secondary form:* and we are told how that ideal displayed that of the Greco-Roman world; evolved itself into medieval Christendom; and then passed into the phase of decadence. The period from the Renaissance and the Reformation to the Revolution is considered to have been that of transition to the cycle of the Ideal of the True, the highest form of the Good. The characteristics of this cycle, the features of this new world, are interestingly delineated. The growth of self-government is traced. Democracy, it is maintained, may already safely feel confident that the future belongs to it. The work which it is now called to undertake is described as being to constitute the confederation of the States of Europe, to enlighten and moralise the

proletariat, to organise a vast system of colonisation, to civilise all barbarous peoples, and to fashion the globe into a rich and beautiful habitation for man. In a word, M. Benloew shows himself a democrat of firm and hopeful faith.

It seems to me that he has altogether failed to prove what he regards as the great law of history. But had it been provable I am quite inclined to believe that he would have proved it. He has distinguished himself in various departments of philology, literature, and erudition. The book under our consideration itself shows an exceptionally wide and intimate familiarity with history. It contains many luminous and ingenious views, and various excellent sections. Its estimate of the significance of the chief phases of Christian civilisation is especially remarkable for the insight and impartiality which it displays. Rarely, I should suppose, has a Jew, warmly attached to the ancient faith of his race, appreciated so justly and sympathetically the influence of Christianity on the history of humanity.

M. Benloew, I may add, makes an interesting attempt (pp. 291-300), to prove a law of evolutions of fifteen years. M. Soulavie had previously attempted to show that such a law was traceable in the history of France during the eighteenth century.[1] M. Benloew maintains that it can be verified throughout the whole history of France, and also, although less distinctly, in the histories of most countries which have been drawn into the general movement of civilisation. I shall consider laws of this kind when I examine the historical theories of the late Joseph Ferrari.

[1] 'Pièces inédites sur les regnes de Louis XIV., Louis XV., et Louis XVI.,' 1809.

CHAPTER X.

HISTORICAL PHILOSOPHY OF NATURALISM AND POSITIVISM.

I.

The sensationalism or empiricism of the eighteenth century was cast down but not destroyed, widely displaced but not extinguished, by the religious and philosophical reaction which set in against it early in the present century. When least popular it had still some adherents. Ideology continued to be the psychology most in favour with physicists. It found a home in the School of Medicine. It was the source whence the Saint-Simonians and Fourierists derived the principles on which they based their sociological constructions. It has survived the attacks of the theocratists, romanticists, and spiritualists of all shades and schools, and has even renewed its vigour, assumed new forms, undertaken fresh enterprises, and regained much of the ground which it had lost. The representatives of the antagonistic philosophy overlooked the necessity of giving an adequate place in their system of thought to physical science. The seriousness of this error has made itself increasingly felt with every marked advance and new development of the physical sciences, and such advances and developments have been unprecedentedly numerous in the present century. Hence sensationalism has to a large extent regained its empire, and is very prevalent in the forms of Naturalism and of Positivism. Both owe what favour they enjoy mainly to what measure of plausibility they have been able to give to their pretensions to be systems of philosophy founded on the methods and conclusions of the natural or positive sciences. It is not my business to discuss these pretensions in a general form, or these systems in them-

selves. It is only necessary for me to treat of the historical theorising to which the principles and tendencies of French Naturalism and Positivism have given rise. The first two thinkers who have to be brought under consideration both bore the name Comte, but were not related by birth, and were very unlike each other, intellectually and morally.

Charles Comte (1782-1837), one of the founders of Naturalism, was born sixteen and died twenty years earlier than Auguste Comte, the founder of Positivism. As editor of the 'Censeur,' and as a member of the Chamber of Deputies, he maintained, in the face of opposition and even persecution, the principles of political justice and liberty with a courage and consistency which did him infinite honour. As a man he was conscientious and generous; unselfish, unpretentious, and unambitious; not subtle, profound, or brilliant, but of vigorous and sound judgment, much learning, and indefatigable industry.

His 'Traité de Législation' (4 vols., 1822-23) has been deservedly commended by judges so competent as Sir G. C. Lewis and Mr Buckle. Both had found in it aid and instruction, as all may do who are engaged in the study of historical and political science. It is not, and does not profess to be, an abstract or theoretical treatise on legislation. Neither is it quite what it does profess to be, "an exposition of the general laws according to which peoples prosper, perish, or remain stationary," seeing that it cannot be said to have established any laws of the kind strictly so called. It is rich in instructive facts and judicious reflections, but it contains few, if any, properly historical laws. Had it realised its author's aim it would have been a system of historical philosophy; but this it certainly is not.

Charles Comte contends for the application of the same method of study to the moral world which had been found successful in the case of the physical world. His only aim, he tells us, is "to trace back the sciences of legislation and morals to the simple observation of facts, and so to give to them the same certainty which has been given to others less important." But he recognises such facts only as are not of an individual but of a social character; only the manners and history of nations, not states of personal consciousness. Like Auguste

Comte, he treats the introspective or psychological method as illegitimate and futile. To study aright those external, social, or historical facts which are alone, in his view, to be relied on, he insists on our examining them without prejudices of any kind, and uninfluenced by religious beliefs, moral convictions, or philosophical speculations. He overlooks to what a vast extent historical development is a psychological process, and, therefore, only explicable by psychological analysis and induction. Not exclusive attention to fact, but failure to recognise an immense department of fact, is the sole source and whole secret of his "naturalism."

It is impossible, he thinks, to account for the origin of society. The attempt of Rousseau to do so he subjects to a criticism perhaps the most searching and severe which it has ever received. It is more crushing than any which came from the theocratic school, inasmuch as it is more unimpassioned. While implacably calm, it leaves unexposed hardly anything that is false in the alleged facts, sophistical in the pretended arguments, hollow or exaggerated in the declamations, or pernicious in the doctrines, of the author of the 'Contrat Social.'

C. Comte's discussion of the questions which relate to the influence of physical nature on human development must have been the fruit of long and careful study. It was as great an advance on Montesquieu's treatment of the subject as Montesquieu's had been on that of Bodin. It disproved, corrected, or confirmed a host of Montesquieu's observations and conclusions. It showed that he had ascribed too much to climate, and too little to the configuration of the earth's surface, the distribution of mountains and rivers, &c.; and that he had conceived vaguely, and even to a large extent erroneously, of the modes in which climate and the fertility or sterility of soil affect human development. But while Comte thus justly criticised Montesquieu, he himself exaggerated the efficiency of physical agencies. Indeed, he virtually traced to their operation the whole development of history. And this he could not consistently avoid doing. Having assumed that human nature was essentially sensation conditioned by organisation, and, consequently, essentially passive, he could not logically avoid holding also that the development of human

nature and the evolution of human society have been absolutely determined by the factors which modify the bodily organisation and act on the bodily senses of men. Accordingly he has assumed that physical agencies ultimately account for historical change and movement, for public institutions and laws. To the influence of race he has ascribed only a secondary and subordinate place among these agencies. He maintains that the distinctions of race are not primary or specific, but explicable by the action of climate and the physical medium.

Various authors have represented civilisation as advancing from east to west. According to Charles Comte it has spread from the equator northwards. 'When we watch the course of civilisation on each of the chief divisions of the earth, we see enlightenment at first acquired in warm climates; then expand into temperate climates; and at length stop at, or hardly penetrate into, cold climates." Had he proved this proposition he would not have demonstrated a law, but have simply indicated a general fact, presupposing law and requiring explanation. But he has not proved it. There is no evidence that civilisation originated at the equator; no likelihood even that it originated either in the moister or the drier parts of the torrid zone, alike unfavourable as they are to the development of man. The lands earliest civilised, Comte says, were China, Hindostan, Persia, a part of Arabia, Egypt, and Asia Minor. But none of these lands are on the equator; and most of them are a long way from it. Further, it is not certain that the civilisation of any of these countries was original, or how their civilisations were related to one another. The oldest remains, indeed, of great cities are to be found in these lands; but civilisation must surely have long preceded architectural achievements, which are in many cases as remarkable as those of the present day.

Charles Comte fully recognises that the same physical medium has a very different influence on different generations; and that institutions and laws, education and manners, and, in a word, all the constituents of the social medium, have as real an influence on the development of history as those of the physical medium. Yet he assumes the latter to be the first, although to a large extent only indirect, causes of the whole

amount of change effected. A human nature in itself utterly empty and passive must be built up through the senses from without. It may be the subject of history, but it cannot be also its chief factor. Here lay Charles Comte's radical error. He failed to perceive that the intelligence, the imagination, the passions, the conscience, and the will of man are more direct and powerful historical agencies than climate or soil. The human soul itself is the main and distinctive source of history. History is essentially the work and manifestation of human nature. A true science of history can only be attained through the investigation of history as a psychological phenomenon,—a product of mind, influenced but not generated by the physical medium in which it appears.[1]

Auguste Comte was born at Montpellier in 1798. Although both his parents were Legitimists and Catholics, he had become at fourteen years of age a republican and an unbeliever. He was educated at the Lyceum of Montpellier (1807-14), and at the Polytechnic School of Paris (1814-16), from which he was expelled on account of insubordination. As a student he was diligent but intractable; he excelled especially in mathematics, but gave proofs of a generally powerful intellect, and devoted much time to private reading and reflection. While at the Polytechnic School he perused the works of most of the leading philosophical writers of the eighteenth century. Shortly after his expulsion from it he began his literary career.[2] From 1817

[1] The fourth volume of the 'Traité' is one of the best studies on slavery and its effects ever published.

[2] The earliest essay of Comte which has been published, 'Mes réflexions,' is of date June 1816. It is, for the most part, a parallel between "the tyrants of the Terror and the tyrants of the Restoration," in which "eleven points of resemblance" are insisted upon. It displays an intense hatred of Louis XVIII. It gives expression also to that aversion to Napoleon which Comte retained to the end of his life, and which led him to recommend, in the fourth volume of the 'System of Positive Polity,' that the ashes of the Conqueror should be sent back to St Helena, his column in the *Place Vendôme* cast down, and "a noble statue of Charlemagne, the incomparable founder of the Western Republic" substituted for it. This essay first appeared in Renouvier's 'Crit. phil.' for June 1882. The Appendix to the fourth volume of the 'System' contains a series of essays originally published at various dates between 1819 and 1828, including that of 1822, in which Comte first stated what he regarded as his great discovery of the law of the Three States. These essays are very interesting, exhibit the best qualities of their author's mind, and form the best introduction

to 1824 he was closely associated with Saint-Simon. In 1826 he began to expound his philosophy in a course of lectures, which was interrupted for a lengthened period by insanity. The first volume of his 'Cours de philosophie positive' appeared in 1830, and the last (sixth) in 1842. This is far the most important of his works; and is even, perhaps, notwithstanding many imperfections, the most important work which had appeared up to the time of its publication in one great department of philosophy—philosophy as the theory of the sciences, or, as Comte calls it, positive philosophy. And whatever else philosophy may or should be, it is clearly bound to be what Comte, in his great work, represents it with so much ability and general truthfulness as being—namely, science, yet not merely a special science, but the science which has the processes and results of all the special sciences for its data: the general or universal science which has so risen above the special and particular in science as to be able to contemplate the sciences as parts of a system which reflects and elucidates a world of which the variety is not more wonderful than the unity. With the completion of his 'Cours' Comte worthily closed the first period or phase of his philosophical career. He had, as he thought, elaborated a strictly scientific philosophy, based on the co-ordination and generalisation of all the sciences, and established and evolved in a truly rational manner. He held that he had transformed science into philosophy by a self-consistent and comprehensive logical process which advances from the general to the special, from the universe to man; and this so as to show the falsity and futility of all theological and metaphysical philosophy, and to provide an indispensable and solid basis for a definitive doctrine of social organisation, such

to his other writings. They were collected and republished by him in order to prove that his "political system, far from being opposed to his philosophy, is so completely its outcome, that the latter was created as the basis of the former." He had published others which have not yet been identified; and which he did not wish to be brought to light, for the reason given in the following *naïve* and suggestive words: "Those alone are preserved which reveal any characteristic aspirations, all such being set aside as betray the unfortunate personal influence that overshadowed my earliest efforts. . . . I disavow any other edition, and I have destroyed the unpublished materials."—See Special Preface to General Appendix. My quotations from the 'System' are from the English translation, which is an almost perfect rendering of the original.

as he had from the beginning of his connection with Saint-Simon had in view. But he had still to work out this doctrine. To do so was the task to which he devoted the second part of his life—that in which the following works were produced: 'Discours sur l'ensemble du positivisme,' 1848, 'Système de politique positive,' 1851-54, 'Catéchisme positiviste,' 1852, and 'Synthèse subjective,' 1856. The 'Système' embodies nearly the whole thinking of Comte's life during the second period. It was deemed by its author his chief work, and is generally so regarded by orthodox Comtists—a judgment in which I cannot at all concur. The general results which had been reached in the 'Cours' are retained in the 'Système,' and the end to which the former was designed to be a preparation is in the latter directly sought to be realised; but the points of view taken up in the two works are opposed, the methods followed are different, and the general character of the doctrine in passing from the one to the other has been profoundly changed. In the later years of his life Comte was absorbed in the exercise of his functions as "the high priest of humanity," and in endeavouring to gain converts to his system of polity and worship. He died on the 5th September 1857, in Paris, at Rue Monsieur-le-Prince 10—the most sacred spot on earth in the eyes of the religious positivists of all lands.[1]

Comte's philosophy of nature and of history originated in the interaction within his mind of the chief intellectual and

[1] As to the life, system, and influence of Comte, in addition to his own works already mentioned, his letters to Valat, and his 'Testament,' the following writings may be indicated as among those most worthy of being consulted: Littré, 'Auguste Comte et la philosophie positive,' and 'Fragments de philosophie positive'; Robinet, 'Notice sur l'œuvre et sur la vie d' A. Comte'; 'Revue Occidentale,' 1878-92; C. de Blignières, 'Exposition de la philosophie positive'; Ch. Pellarin, 'Essai critique sur la philosophie positive'; Poëy, 'Le positivisme'; Lewes, 'Philosophy of the Sciences'; J. S. Mill, 'Auguste Comte and Positivism'; E. Caird, 'The Social Philosophy and Religion of Comte'; and Hermann Gruber, S. J., 'August Comte, der Begründer des Positivismus,' and 'Der Positivismus vom Tode August Comte's bis auf unsere Tage' (1857-1891). Among the host of pamphlets, lectures, and essays on Comtism which have appeared in this country, those of Bridges, Congreve, Harrison, Huxley, Martineau, Spencer, Tulloch, Whewell, &c., are too well known to require to be more exactly specified. Similar publications have been at least as numerous in France, and not rare in Germany, Italy, and America.

social movements in the France of his age. It was a sort of synthesis, instructive even in its inconsistency because reflecting the incoherence and self-contradiction of a disorganised and transitional epoch. It can only be understood aright when viewed in relation to the movements and tendencies to which it owed its being and form.

Comte was thoroughly French, the direct and immediate influences which moulded his life and doctrine being almost exclusively French. He was very slightly affected by German thought. He was to the end of his life virtually ignorant of German philosophy. In 1843 he consulted Mr Mill as to the advisability of making some general acquaintance with German philosophical doctrines, but, on being dissuaded, abandoned the idea.[1] It is true that in 1824 his friend M. d'Eichtal sent him from Berlin a translation which he had made for him of Kant's short essay, "Idea of a Universal History," and that Comte expressed in reply the warmest admiration of it; but in 1824 he had already discovered his sociological laws, and his political convictions were definitively formed. There are no traces in his writings of acquaintance with either the metaphysical or ethical works of Kant. It is quite certain that his classification of the sciences was not suggested, as J. D. Morell and others have supposed, by acquaintance with Schelling's successive "potences" of the Absolute. He once pronounced Hegel "un homme de mérite," but it was when he hoped he might be made use of to spread positivism in Germany; and he has assigned him a place in the 'Positivist Calendar,' but as the coequal of Sophie Germain. Any coincidences which have been pointed out between the views of Comte and Hegel are of such a nature as would not, although multiplied fifty-fold, prove in the least that the former had borrowed from the latter. They relate to views of which Hegel was neither the author nor the sole proprietor, which he only shared with hundreds of other thinkers, and which were current in the catholic and socalistic medium in which Comte lived. Why label as "Hegelian" what were commonplaces among the adherents of socialism and the theological reaction? Why suppose Comte to have derived from a distance opinions

[1] Littré, 'Auguste Comte,' pp. 446, 447.

which were floating in the intellectual atmosphere around him, and to be had for the inbreathing?[1]

The generation which lived under the First Empire knew no other philosophy than that which had become prevalent before the Revolution. Comte came under the influence of this philosophy in early youth; at the Polytechnic School he read the works of most of its leading representatives. He accepted its cardinal principle that "thought depends on sense, or, more broadly, on the environment;" he became imbued with its aversion to metaphysics and theology, and with its ardent faith in physical science; and he set himself to build up all the materials of knowledge into one grand and solid edifice, resting on the foundation which it had laid. Considered simply as a philosophy, the positivism of Comte is essentially a continuation of the empirical philosophy of the eighteenth century, any superority over earlier forms of that philosophy being mainly due to the remarkable development of the several sciences which have been combined by it into a single theoretical system. It is otherwise with positivism as a social doctrine. Social and religious reactions generally precede philosophical reactions. In France the social and religious reaction was in full force before the philosophical reaction made itself felt. Comte yielded to it. Hence two contrary and contending currents of thought met and mingled in his mind, and made of his intellectual life an inherent and permanent contradiction. He was intensely hostile to what he regarded as the anarchical and revolutionary tendencies of the eighteenth century. He hated individualism, *laisser faire,* and such "rights of man" as private judgment, human equality, and sovereignty of the people. His sympathies were more with the reaction than with the Revolution. He speaks of the

[1] Comte owed more to Scottish than to German writers. Hume he acknowledges to have been his "chief philosophical precursor"; and he often so refers to him as to show that he had studied both his 'Essays' and his 'History.' He avows his indebtedness to Adam Smith's 'Wealth of Nations'; and, writing in 1825, says of the 'Philosophical Essay on the History of Astronomy': "This work, too little known on the Continent, and generally insufficiently appreciated, is more positive in its character than the other productions of Scottish philosophy, those of Hume excepted. Remarkable in its day, it may even yet be studied with great advantage."—Pos. Pol., iv. 591. He has given both Robertson and Ferguson a place in the 'Positivist Calendar.'

services rendered by the representatives of the former with an enthusiastic recognition which he never manifests, except in the case of Condorcet, to those of the latter. He thought revolutionary ideas had overdone their work; that destruction had been carried to excess; and that construction was much more needed. For his estimate of the medieval type of society, and of medieval institutions, he was indebted to writers of the theocratic school. He showed for De Maistre a somewhat excessive admiration: 'Le Pape' was, I think, the source of more of his ideas than any other single book. It was De Maistre and De Bonald, he has said, who taught him that "the past as a whole could not be understood unless it be steadily respected."[1] Yet he had no sympathy with the deeper and truly spiritual convictions and feelings of the theocratists; with their faith in God and Christ, their sense of sin and craving for sanctity, their consciousness of the need of redemption and divine guidance, and their aspiration towards a real immortality. In one respect, however, he saw more clearly than they: he never fell into their illusion that the future of society would be essentially a reproduction of the past. He perceived that mere reaction must have always a very temporary success; that humanity never simply returns to a position which it has once abandoned. Naturally he showed himself more conscious of the retrograde character of the teaching of the reactionists in the earlier than in the later period of his life: and yet he became increasingly dependent on them, and indebted to them, as he became more retrograde in his own aims, more zealous and ambitious to be accepted as the supreme legislator of humanity: or, in other words, as he advanced in the transformation of his system, into an atheistical Popery, with himself for chief priest and sole prophet.

The connection of positivism with socialism was of the closest kind. The socialistic movement aimed at the rejection of what was false and the retention and development of what was true both in the reactionary and in the revolutionary movement. It sought to overcome the existing anarchy and to

[1] Pos. Pol., iii. 527. The literal rendering of the last words of the sentence is, "without an unchangeable veneration."

organise society by following the guidance and employing the methods of modern science. Positivism arose directly and entirely out of this movement. It is an offshoot or variety of socialism, and, indeed, of Saint-Simonian socialism. The socialism of Saint-Simon contained all the germs of the positivism of Comte. Almost every leading idea which Comte expounded and applied had been previously enunciated by Saint-Simon. Comte was to the end of his days, as regards the cardinal principles of his system, a disciple of Saint-Simon, although a very ungrateful one, jealously anxious to be supposed not to have been indebted to him. Let us recall to mind in a general way what Saint-Simon preceded Comte in teaching. Repeatedly he used the term *positif* in the sense which suggested the formation of the term *positivisme.* He employed habitually the word "philosophy" to denote precisely what Comte meant by it. Thus he says: "The particular sciences are the elements of the general science to which we give the name of philosophy; so philosophy has necessarily had, and always will have, the same character as the particular sciences." Then, just as Comte afterwards did, he insisted that the only legitimate method of finding truth is the immediate investigation of facts, the data of the senses; and he equally inferred that knowledge is limited to the relative and phenomenal, and that belief in aught absolute or supersensuous, in entities or substances, in efficient or final causes, in God or soul, must be mystical and chimerical. Instructed by Dr Burdin, he further taught that science as a whole and all its divisions pass from a conjectural into a positive state, from theologism into positivism, through a transitional state partly conjectural and partly positive; that the chief divisions of science have done so in an order determined by the degree of the generality and complexity of their objects; that these sciences are mathematics, astronomy, chemistry, and physiology; and that the order of their discovery is also that in which they should be studied. Psychology he represented as a mere derivative from physiology, not as an independent science, or one of a distinct group. Physiology he maintained had at length passed into the positive stage, and morals and politics were about to do so. Philosophy he asserted could not become positive until the several fundamental

sciences had become positive, and could not fail to become so when that happened. Comte only reaffirmed and developed what he said on all these points. When we pass from general philosophy to sociology we find that Comte was here also, in the main, a disciple of Saint-Simon. Comte followed Saint-Simon when he represented the development of humanity as having been throughout subject to unalterable laws of nature which excluded the intervention of any wills higher than human; when he took Condorcet's 'Esquisse' as the work to be resumed, revised, and completed by the true historical philosopher; and when he showed in what ways the attempt made in it might be surpassed. Saint-Simon conceived of the course of history as passing through three phases or periods—one credulous and theological, another critical and incoherent, and a final stage which is scientific and organic; he thus made it easy for Comte to formulate and apply "the law of the three states." Saint-Simon further subdivided the theological period into a fetichistic, polytheistic, and monotheistic epoch; and in this likewise he was followed by Comte. Again, one of the thoughts which Saint-Simon most frequently expressed, and which exercised most influence on his life and theorising, was that the organisation of society could only be achieved through the organisation of the sciences into a general science or true philosophy. Only sensitive vanity and prejudice can account for Comte denying this, and alleging that Saint-Simon had proposed "to put the cart before the horse." When Comte, avowedly as the disciple of Saint-Simon, wrote the essay published in 1824 as a "Prospectus of the scientific labours necessary for the reorganisation of society," Saint-Simon praised it as a plan of the scientific part of his system, but pointed out as a defect that it dealt with science without reference to religion and sentiment. He showed his own sense of the importance of providing satisfaction to the religious nature and the social sentiments when, in the last of his writings, he propounded a new religion, and tried to put humanity in the place of God. How unable Comte was to emancipate himself from Saint-Simonian principles was clearly shown as soon as he came face to face with the problem of social organisation, and had the question as to how the moral and emotional prin-

ciples of human nature are to be satisfied forced upon him. He had no other solution to give than that which Saint-Simon had already given. Even in devising a scheme of worship, a positivist "cult," he had not merely to borrow from Catholicism, but to become an imitator of the Saint-Simonian Père Enfantin, whose pretensions and sickly absurdities he once thoroughly despised. In a word, Comtism must be admitted to be, as a whole, a modified and developed Saint-Simonianism.

It is quite consistent with the truth of all that has just been stated, to hold that the disciple was in most respects much greater than the master. And he undoubtedly was so. Although Saint-Simon had the most genial affinity for novel and interesting ideas, he had scarcely any other remarkable intellectual qualities, and was quite incapable of developing, as Comte did, either a philosophy of the sciences or a theory of society.

Comte was not a discoverer or eminent specialist in any of the sciences, not even in mathematics; nor had he the encyclopædic knowledge of, for example, Ampère or Whewell among his contemporaries. It has been shown by competent critics that his knowledge of astronomy, optics, chemistry, and biology, was in various respects not up to date when he published his 'Cours'; his psychology was of the crudest kind; and his social dynamics had many faults which arose from an inexcusable ignorance of history. A man, however, who takes all the sciences for his province, cannot be expected to know that enormous province as minutely as those who confine their studies to a single science or portion of a science should know the limited field of their choice. And when all deductions have been made in estimating Comte, he must be allowed to have been a very exceptional and remarkable man. He had a capacious memory, a powerful and logical intelligence, a wide acquaintance with scientific facts, and a firm grasp of the scientific generalisations to which he attained. The truly philosophical character of his mind appeared in his constant striving after comprehensiveness and completeness of view, his insight into the unity and relationships of the sciences, and his profound study of scientific method. The power which most distinguished him was that of systematisation, one not to be

confounded with mere aptitude for classification, but comprising all the qualities which constitute ability to connect and distribute facts and truths according to their natural affinities, even on the most extensive scale. Few have possessed this power in a higher degree than Comte; and he employed it, so far as his properly philosophical task was concerned, to excellent effect. In resolving to elaborate a doctrine so complete and comprehensive that it should embrace all knowledge and action, he proposed to himself a magnificent aim; with a noble tenacity he adhered to his purpose; and in labouring to realise it he displayed a devotedness, perseverance, ingenuity, and constructive power most worthy of admiration. The work which he left behind him has already exerted, and will probably long exert, a great and stimulating influence on the minds of men; for although much of it will probably perish, much of it may as probably endure. In the character of Comte there was much to respect and much to regret. His will was strong; but so, likewise, was his wilfulness. He was self-denying, but also self-assertive. The absorbing affection for a woman, which revealed to him the significance of emotion and the power of religion, testify to greatness of heart; but the testimony is weakened and stained by extravagance and sickly sentimentalism. The love of humanity which inspired his labours reflects the purest glory on his life; but, unhappily, it was never dissociated from an inordinate self-esteem—an exorbitant pride and vanity. It is difficult to do full justice to the real merits of a man so full of the conceit of his own incomparable superiority, so suspicious of rivalship, so unable to bear contradiction and criticism, as Comte was. A nature so devoid as his of true self-knowledge and humility may seem "the normal type of human nature" to a small sect of peculiarly minded persons; but to men in general it cannot fail to seem a saddening spectacle, whatever be its powers and excellences. These words are not irrelevant. We can only explain aright the despotic features of the Comtian polity and the deplorable foolishness of the Comtian religion by tracing them primarily to those defects of Comte's character and temperament to which I have referred as briefly as I could.

It was not Comte's endeavour merely to discover special

subordinate laws; or to expound isolated ideas, however admirable; or to establish in any department of study truths of detail; but to construct a system of thought so wide and well arranged, that not only every science, but every large scientific generalisation and every great social force, would thereby have its proper place assigned it and full justice done to it: a system in which nothing should be arbitrary, but everything determined by a few closely connected laws proved by the concurrent application of deduction and induction. This was a perfectly legitimate and rational undertaking, the accomplishment of which would be the fulfilment of one of the great functions of philosophy, although not, as Comte thought, of its only function.

In the Comtian system the philosophy of history ranks not as a science, but as a division of a science,—the second part of Social Physics or Sociology. Social Physics is represented as ruled by biological laws, yet not a mere corollary of biology, but an independent science, which has a distinctive and dominant method of its own, the historical method. It is the function of this method to compare the various conditions through which humanity passes in its entire historical development. It is only by such comparison that any social condition can be understood. The particular is unintelligible without some measure of knowledge of the whole. The laws of social sequence and concomitance, however, which are discovered by the historical method, ought always to be connected with the positive theory of human nature established by biological science. Comte regarded sociological laws as not merely empirical but rational, as capable not merely of inductive but also of deductive demonstration. He denied, of course, that law can be rational in the sense of being traceable to any innate principle, or to any metaphysical principle, as power, force, efficient causality, or that it can be anything deeper than, or different from, a uniform relation of sequence or resemblance between phenomena. But he affirmed that laws may be rational in the sense of being deducible and deduced from wider laws as well as empirically ascertained by an induction from instances; and that in this sense—the only sense in which the word rational can, consistently with the principles

of positivism, be used in connection with law — the fundamental laws of sociology are actually rational. Besides the historical method, the methods of the antecedent sciences are represented as more or less applicable in sociological study. Being the most complex of the sciences, sociology admits of and requires the employment of all the processes and resources of research and reasoning. Comte had no sympathy with historical scepticism, which he denounces as sophistry and traces to unwillingness to admit the credibility of the Bible. He had little sympathy, indeed, even with the critical spirit either in sociology or any other department of science. He warned thinkers against inquiring "too closely" into the exact truth of scientific laws; and pronounced worthy of "severe reprobation" those who break down, "by too minute an investigation," generalisations which they cannot replace. Yet there is little to criticise and much to admire in his treatment of sociological and historical method. It was not the original and exhaustive exposition of the logic of social and historical science which it has often been represented to be; but it was a very judicious and useful contribution to it. Of novelty and subtlety in it there is almost none, but of solid truth and good sense abundance.

Social physics (sociology) is divided into social statics and social dynamics.[1] Social statics is the theory of the spontaneous order of human society, and social dynamics the theory of its natural progress. The one exhibits the conditions of the social existence of the individual, the family, and the species, and the other the course of human development. It is essential, Comte insists, to regard these two theories as supplementary or complementary of each other. The ideas of order and progress correspond in sociology to the ideas of organisation and life in biology, and are as rigorously inseparable. The combination of them is the grand difficulty of the science, but of primary importance. It was because he thought he had succeeded in combining them that Comte claimed to be the founder of sociology. He admitted that Aristotle had

[1] Holding that sociology is not a physical science, I, of course, object to its being designated "social physics," or divided into "social statics" and "social dynamics."

almost wrought out the theory of social order, and that for nearly a century that of progress had been receiving a continuous elaboration; but he held, notwithstanding, that order and progress had never been exhibited in their true relationship, but, on the contrary, set in radical opposition to each other. And his own view of his position as a sociological theorist was that, standing between two extremes of hitherto antagonistic opinion, he could not merely effect a makeshift compromise between them like the eclectics and the doctrinaires, but could establish on a truly scientific foundation a doctrine which would definitely settle the strife between the advocates of order and progress, and help to settle the wider and deeper strife in society itself, of which that was but the expression in speculation. He flattered himself that his theory of society contained all the truth that had been said on behalf of order by the reactionary school, and all the truth that had been said on behalf of progress by the revolutionary school; while it, further, so reconciled the claims, and exhibited the relationship of order and progress, that order would henceforth be seen to be the basis of progress, and progress to be the development of order.

It would be out of place to discuss here the doctrine expounded in the social statics. But we may relevantly say that it is an appropriate introduction to the social dynamics, and a valuable contribution to politics. The conclusions which it embodies as to the relations of the individual and society, of egoism and altruism, of intellect, action, and affection, of the family, the state, and government, of worldly and spiritual power, of education and morals, are generally excellent; and even when questionable or erroneous, they are serviceable from their suggestiveness. Its moral spirit is, on the whole, sound and invigorating. It certainly does not flatter or foster the evil tendencies most prevalent in the present age. But it is unquestionably a reactionary doctrine. Comte has not held the balance of judgment justly poised, but has thrown more weight into the scale of social authority, and given less to that of individual independence, than is due. Instead of rejecting only what was false, and retaining only what was true in the conflicting doctrines of Rousseau and De Maistre, he, in reality, gave up what was true in the doctrine of the former for what

was false in that of the latter. Rousseau ascribed worth to the individual alone; Comte followed De Maistre in denying all worth to the individual, and in representing him as owing everything to society; and, as he expressly says, as being *apart from society a mere abstraction.* He will not allow that the individual has any right, *except the right of doing his duty;* or, in other words, that he has any *rights* properly so called. Hence he consistently objects to the use of the word *right* altogether, and maintains that it "ought to be excluded from political language as the word *cause* from truly philosophical language." Comte was a genuine socialist. He was hostile to freedom of thought and action; so impressed with a sense of the importance of authority, that he could not venture to recommend any guarantees against, or restrictions on, its abuse, in the least likely to be effectual. This explains the chief faults both of his social statics and his social dynamics.

Comte expounded his theory of social dynamics first in the 'Cours,' and afterwards in the 'Système.' So far as regards the history of the past, although the two expositions bear witness to a change in the spirit and point of view of their author, they differ little in their matter, or as to principles, laws, general conclusions, periods, &c. With these we shall deal in the first place, and chiefly. The peculiar opinions as to the social and religious future of humanity, set forth in the works which belong to Comte's second period, concern us comparatively little. It must be here observed, however, that at no period did Comte look upon history from a purely scientific point of view. He was always influenced in his treatment of it by practical interests. From the outset of his career as an author, his mind was possessed and ruled by the fundamental principles of socialism. What was the chief end of life to Saint-Simon became also his: the reorganisation of society through the establishment of a "new spiritual power" capable of giving unity and direction to opinion and action. He gave clear expression to this aim in his early essays; and its influence is evident throughout the entire system of his positive philosophy, but especially in that part of it which explains the historical evolution of humanity. The judgments he passes on institutions have a double reference,—one to what has been, another

to what he has decided ought to be and will be in the future. Thus the grounds of his extremely favourable estimate of medieval Catholicism were not merely certain considerations of a partly sentimental and partly historical nature, but, still more, the belief that although the Catholic doctrine, like every other theological doctrine, was to be rejected, the Catholic organisation was to be retained and extended by positivism, with such modifications as the substitution of a scientific for a theological creed might render necessary. And his aversion to Protestantism and modern philosophy had for one main reason the fact that they had broken up the external unity of the Catholic or medieval form of social organisation, and were hostile to its restoration.

Social dynamics studies the changes which society undergoes in the course of ages; the development of humanity in time. It is the science of history. Social changes follow one another in a natural order of filiation, each state of society necessarily arising from its antecedent state, and necessarily determining the character of its consequent state. Human development could not have been other than it is. History is a process subject to fixed and unalterable laws, which manifest their presence with ever-growing clearness as the effects of merely transient and particular influences are eliminated. This process has obviously been one of progress,—one in which human nature has gradually come to the knowledge and possession of itself, and shown what it is and is capable of.

Progress is a law of the physical world as well as of human history. There is progress from plant to animal, from animal to man; and progress within the vegetable, animal, and human kingdoms. Social evolution succeeds to and implies organic evolution; historical progress is a form of biological progress, and presupposes it. Yet social or historical evolution and progress are distinct from organic or biological evolution or progress. There is a solution of continuity between them. For although man is merely the highest animal, he is not any lower animal transformed by development or modification. There are distinctions between things for which development and modification cannot account. The lower never explains the higher: it is at once the differential characteristic and the

fundamental error of materialism to have ignored or denied this principle. *Omne vivum ex vivo* is a truth which no really scientific man will question. The doctrine of the fixity of species must be firmly maintained against the Lamarckian theory of development. Man is *sui generis*. All the lower creatures are rude and partial embryonic prefigurations or sketches of man. All the laws of the universe meet and rule in him. And yet he has a nature of his own, with its distinctive qualities and laws. And what is true of himself is equally true of his history.

Comte's conception of human progress is not only connected with that of progress in general, but with that of social order. While accepting, as a whole, the previous elaboration of the conception of human progress by his predecessors, he added to it not a little which they had overlooked when he defined progress as the development of order, and prefaced his treatment of it with an investigation into the conditions of order. Progress thus viewed must not only never violate but always involve the principles of social stability, personal morality, a naturally regulated family life, and subordination to organised authority in the State. According to this conception of progress, the character of all social changes may be ascertained from their influence on these the fundamental principles of social existence.

The direction of progress is represented as being the establishment of the supremacy of the distinctively human faculties of man over his merely animal faculties. According to Rousseau the natural man is a self-dependent being, guided by infallible instinct. The man who thinks, he said, is a depraved animal. According to Comte, although reason and the sympathetic feelings are at first weak in man, while instinct and the personal desires are strong, the former, nevertheless, constitute his true nature, and human progress is the process by which they attain supremacy. It is the triumph of mind over sense, of reason over appetite, of the altruistic or social over the egoistic or selfish affections.

The rate of progress is represented as determined by various causes, of which some are primary and universal, and others secondary and particular. Among the former are changes in

the human organism and the media in which it is developed. Among the latter are the mean duration of human life and the natural increase of population. Were the mean duration of life, for example, a thousand years, progress would be necessarily much slower than it is, for the conservative tendencies of age would be, relatively to the innovating tendencies of youth, far stronger than at present. A rapid increase of population produces a rapid progress by rendering necessary a more specialised and intense activity.

In social progress there is, according to Comte, no variation either of the general direction or of the order in which the stages succeed each other. As to the latter, however, he holds that progress or retrogression may be so rapid that the intermediate stages may be imperceptible. Hence he expects that the fetichistic communities which have survived to the present day will, under the systematic guidance of the positivist priesthood, pass straight into positivism, without halting in polytheism, monotheism, or a metaphysical mode of thought. Further, the movement of progress is, in his view, not rectilineal but oscillatory around a mean movement which is never widely departed from. Nor is it, as Condorcet and others have held, unlimited. Humanity is equally an organism with the individual man; and, like every organism, it must decay and die. As yet it is only emerging from the preparatory period of its existence; and, therefore, we may be certain that ages of vigorous and progressive life are still before it. It is useless to conjecture when decay will set in or death arrive.

Comte regarded progress as a development of the whole man, intellect, activity, and affection; and therefore, as a general development comprehensive of various particular and correlative developments. He not only saw that there was an industrial development, an intellectual development, a moral development, and an æsthetic development; but that there must be a general historical development inclusive of these particular developments; and that the particular developments must be not mere stages of the general development, but movements pervasive of it from beginning to end, and parallel to one another. He saw that the elements of the social evolution are throughout connected and always acting on one another. His

perception of the fact that social evolution is a general or collective movement, inclusive throughout its whole length of certain distinct special and particular movements, caused him to infer that, though the elements of the historical process are connected, and always acting and reacting on one another, one must be preponderant in order to give impulse to the rest, and to guide them all in the same direction. He saw that only on this condition could there be a general collective movement, correlation between the particular constituent developments, a common goal, and, in a word, the unity presupposed by science. And accordingly, he inquired which was the guiding element. The conclusion he came to was, that it must be that element which can be best conceived of apart from the rest, while the consideration of it enters into the study of the others —*i.e.*, the intellect. The history of society, he argued, must be regulated by the history of the human understanding. Thought is that which determines and guides the course of society. "It is only through the ever-increasingly marked influence of the reason over the general conduct of man and of society, that the gradual march of our race has attained that regularity and persevering continuity which so radically distinguish it from the desultory and barren expansion of even the highest orders of animals, which share, and share with intensest strength, the appetites, passions, and even the primary sentiments of man."

If these views be correct, the fundamental law of history must be sought for in the evolution of the intellect. Comte believed that he had found it in what he called the law of the three states, or the law of historical filiation. It affirms "the necessary passage of all human theories through three successive stages: first, *the theological or fictitious*, which is provisional; secondly, *the metaphysical or abstract*, which is transitional; and, thirdly, *the positive or scientific*, which alone is definitive." "This law," we are told, "is the most precious intellectual acquisition of the human mind. With its ascertainment that long search after the laws of the universe, which began with Thales at the first awakening of the reason, is completed. The immutable order which had been proved to rule throughout the entire physical world, extends its reign over the world of liberty." What is called "the law of hierarchical

generalisation or of the encyclopædic scale" may either be combined with the law of the three states, or reckoned as a second law. It is manifestly the complement of it. It runs thus: "Our subjective conceptions reach the scientific or positive stage in the order of their dependence on each other, which is that of *decreasing generality and increasing complexity.*" Hence the fundamental sciences — mathematics, astronomy, physics, chemistry, biology, sociology, and morals—have become positive in the order in which they have just been named.[1]

If the fundamental law of intellectual evolution, the law of the three states, and its complementary law, the law of hierarchical generalisation, be reduced to one, the second general law of historical progression will be the law of the active evolution of human nature. But according to Comte, the evolution of the active or practical life was in its initial stage one of *offensive war or conquest,* in its transitional stage one of *defensive war,* and has become in its final stage *industrial.* "These three consecutive modes of activity—*conquest, defence, and labour*—correspond exactly to the three stages of intelligence—*fiction, abstraction, and demonstration.* This fundamental correlation gives us also the general explanation of the three natural ages of humanity. Its long infancy, covering all antiquity, had to be essentially theological and military; its adolescence in the middle age was metaphysical and feudal; and lastly, its maturity, which only within the last few centuries has become at all distinguishable, is necessarily positive and industrial."

The affective evolution of human nature has not, according to Comte, the independence either of the intellectual or the active evolution, seeing that the affective region of the brain is not, like those of contemplation and action, in any direct contact with the external world; but it is none the less of immense importance. Feeling is at once the source and end of progress. It is the only standard by which we can properly measure civilisation. It has also its law: "Feeling has its three successive stages, the spontaneous correspondence of which with those of intellect and activity is now recognised as the necessary consequence of the joint influence of those two

[1] I have examined Comte's view of the evolution of the sciences in the last of the papers indicated in the note on p. 22.

evolutions. In other words, *the social instinct had to be purely civic in antiquity, collective in the middle age, and universal in the final state,* as its modern aspirations indicate."

The three chief laws regulative of human evolution are thus represented as belonging respectively to the three elements of human nature—speculation, action, and affection. As such evolution must comprehend these elements, and the historical developments to which they may give rise, we must acknowledge that Comte deserved credit for attempting to formulate the laws of their developments, and to indicate at once the course and the correlation of these developments. But the man who fancies that the attempt was successful as regards either the active or the affective evolution must be excessively easy to satisfy. Their so-called "laws" are beneath criticism; they are of a kind which any moderately ingenious person may devise by the dozen. Human activity was not first military and then industrial, but has always been more or less both. The social organisation of ancient Egypt, India, China, Phenicia, &c., was affected at least as powerfully by labour as by war. That war should ever have been more offensive than defensive, or defensive than offensive, is a saying hard to understand. That the social instinct was "purely civic in antiquity" is an affirmation in which the terms "civic" and "antiquity" are both ambiguous. That it was more "collective" in the middle age than in the ancient empires in which the system of castes prevailed would be difficult to prove. And that it has not been "universal" in its aspirations since the spread of Christianity and the conquest of the world by Rome is not in accordance with facts. Comte, it must be added, has made no serious endeavour to prove his alleged laws of active and affective evolution.

We readily admit that such considerations as those just stated are not fatal to his historical doctrine, but only indicative of its incompleteness. If the law of intellectual evolution be satisfactorily made out, that doctrine will be substantially established, however uncertain or erroneous any of its supposed supplementary laws may be found to be. The law of the three states is the *nœud essentiel* of Comte's philosophy of history, as it is of his general philosophy. It is necessary that

we have it principally in view both in our exposition and in our criticism.

The three states are the successive stages through which the mind of man is maintained to pass in the course of history in nations, individuals, and each order of conceptions. The first state is the theological. Theology preceded either metaphysics or science; it goes back as far as history will take us; there is reason to believe it coeval with man. In this state the facts and events of the universe are attributed to supernatural volitions, to the agency of beings or a being adored as divine. The lowest and earliest form of this stage is fetichism, in which man conceives of all external bodies as endowed with a life analogous to his own. Astrolatry is a connecting link between fetichism and polytheism, there being a generality about the stars which, connected with their other characteristics, fits them to be common fetiches. Polytheism is directly derived from fetichism; and it is the second stage or phase of the theological state. It is either conservative and theocratic, as that of Egypt, or progressive and military, as those of Greece and Rome, the one of which was of an intellectual, and the other of a social type. It gradually concentrates itself into monotheism, which, growing out of different forms of polytheism, is of different kinds. Thus the monotheism of the Jews differs from that of Europe, because evolved out of a conservative instead of a progressive polytheism. The contact of these gave rise to Christianity, which culminated in Catholicism, the last and highest type of monotheistic development. With it the long infancy of human thought terminates.

The metaphysical spirit which has been operative in some degree through almost the whole theological period, bringing about even the transition from fetichism to polytheism, and still more from polytheism to monotheism, and which has been constantly growing in strength, now, as there is nothing beyond monotheism but a total issue from theology, throws theology off altogether, and establishes a metaphysical state. Theology dies, and the intellect of humanity which has passed away from it embodies itself in another form. In this second state, abstract forces are substituted for supernatural agents. Phenomena are supposed to be due to causes and essences in-

herent in things. First causes and final causes, these are what the mind in this state longs and strives to know, but in vain; and it begins slowly and gradually to recognise in one sphere of nature after another that a knowledge of these is unattainable to it.

It thus at length reaches a third and final state, that of positive science. In this state the mind surrenders the illusions of its infancy and youth, and ceases to fancy it can transcend nature, or know either the first cause or the end of the universe, or ascertain about things more than experience can tell us of their properties and their relations of coexistence and succession. It is a state of learned ignorance, in which intelligence sees clearly and sharply its own limits, and confines itself within them. Within these limits lie all the positive sciences; beyond them lie theology and metaphysics, the two chief forms of pseudo-science or false belief.

Comte has elaborated and applied these thoughts; and in doing so he has traced the course of the general history of mankind, viewed as exemplifying the law of the three states, and its correlative laws. The picture of universal history which he unfolds is one drawn with great skill and vigour, and in which there are many true and striking features. In various respects it surpassed all previous attempts of the kind.

The ability with which it is executed is apt, indeed, to conceal the fault in it which is least excusable, such untruthfulness as is due to its author's insufficient acquaintance with history. Now, Comte is not to be blamed for having resolved to exhibit not the concrete but the abstract in history; for seldom mentioning particular events, persons, or dates; for confining himself almost exclusively to the delineation of main currents and movements, of general features and tendencies. On the contrary, he deserves credit for having so clearly seen that only thus could history be treated in a philosophical manner, or a philosophy of history be reached. But he erred greatly when he failed to recognise that a real knowledge of the abstract and general in history can only be acquired through a careful and extensive study of its concrete and particular contents; that a philosophy of history ought not to be based on views as to the facts of history hastily adopted

without due criticism and verification. According to his own statement, he "rapidly amassed in early youth the materials which he thought he would need in the great elaboration of which he had already conceived the design, and thenceforth read nothing likely to have an important bearing on the subjects with which he was himself to be occupied." This abstinence from reading he imposed on himself under the name of "cerebral hygiene," "in order not to hurt the originality and homogeneity of his meditations," and as "necessary to elevate the views and give impartiality to the sentiments." He adhered to it with special care when it was peculiarly unreasonable and pernicious—namely, when engaged in theorising on the history of humanity. His historical philosophy is a wonderful testimony to the extraordinary power of reflection and systematisation which enabled him to make so much theory out of so little knowledge. But while we may admire the power which he thus displayed, we must regret the excessive self-confidence which made him unconscious of the extent of his ignorance of the subjects on which he dogmatised. His absolute faith in his own thoughts, his neglect of research, and his ability in constructive theorising, make him a dangerous guide to unwary readers.

We can only touch very briefly even on the chief points in Comte's survey of historical development.

1. It is not altogether a survey of universal history even in its most general or abstract form. It leaves out of view all central and eastern Asia, with its great empires and peculiar civilisations. By this omission Comte evaded the difficulty of verifying his fundamental law where there is least appearance of evidence for it, as it cannot be pretended that the peoples of that portion of Asia have ever been out of the theological state. And even as regards theologism, if he had taken India into account he could hardly have excluded, as he has done, pantheism from the series of theological phases. It is as distinct a phase of theology as any of those on which he dwells. On the other hand, if he had recognised it his series of theological phases would have received an addition which would not fit into his scheme of general, and especially of European, history. Nay, more, acknowledge pantheism as a phase of theological

development, and it becomes apparent that the idea of the *Divine as One* may be reached, and has been reached, by another route than that which led to monotheism. But this raises the question, Is there any single necessary linear series of theological phases or historical states? It forbids our assuming that there is. If, like Comte, we affirm that there is, we must, unlike him, prove the affirmation.

2. Fetichism was, according to Comte, the earliest, and at the same time the purest and best, of the forms to which man's religious tendencies have given rise. He thought there were traces of it to be observed in the actions of the animals immediately below man in the scale of organisation. In the infancy of our race, according to his representation, the spontaneous activity of the human brain predominated over the mechanical influence of the external world, and consequently imagination over observation, sentiment over experience; and man was therefore necessitated to invent causes instead of seeking laws. But these causes could only be reflections of himself, the one being which he knew. He ascribed, therefore, to all objects his own nature, thoughts, motives, and feelings. Everything was to him living, voluntary, intelligent; everything, in a word, was to him divine. All was god; all was fetich. Fetichism is the basis of all theology and of all metaphysics. And it is akin to positivism itself. "Where the fetichist sees life, the positivist sees spontaneous activity." Positivism must go back to fetichism in order to become popular. The pantheism of Germany is only a generalised and systematised fetichism. In spirit it is inferior to the primitive doctrine. "The general progress of the human intellect was in no way retarded by the necessary impotence of fetichism as regards the highest speculations. In the eyes of a true philosopher, the artless ignorance which in this respect characterises the humble thinkers of Central Africa is worth more even in point of rationality than the pompous verbiage of the proud doctors of Germany. For it proceeds from a real, though confused, feeling that any one who remains unfurnished with the scientific basis is unripe for such speculations; and of this basis our metaphysicians are more disgracefully ignorant than the lowest negroes."

In both of his chief works Comte has treated of "the age of fetichism," or what he calls "the spontaneous *régime* of humanity," devoting to it in the 'Cours' more than eighty, and in the 'Système' more than sixty, pages. It is highly probable that he never read a dozen pages regarding it written by any other person than himself. His discussion of fetichism displays a combination of historical ignorance and speculative ingenuity unsurpassed by any of those "doctors of Germany" on whose pride he looked down with at least equal pride. He employs the term "fetichism," as Saint-Simon had done, in an unusual and improper sense; and does not seem to have been aware what its usual and proper sense was. As he uses the term, it means, when stripped of exaggeration, simply nature-worship; and in this sense it may be very plausibly maintained that fetichism was the earliest form of religion, but only on psychological and theoretical grounds. There is no strictly historical evidence that it was the first phase of religion; and it is quite certain that it is not the theology of "the humble thinkers of Central Africa," or the faith most prevalent among any known rude savage tribes. Comte knew exceedingly little about fetichists, and those whom he supposed to be fetichists. And yet he theorised on their motives and beliefs with a confidence, ingenuity, and seeming profundity, not unlikely to deceive to some extent even experts in comparative theology, and almost certain thoroughly to mislead ordinary readers. His extravagant laudation of fetichism is due partly to the ignorance which left him free to evolve his idea of it out of his own inner consciousness, and partly to the affinity between the idea of it thus evolved, and that of positivism as he conceived of it. Of course, if where fetichism sees life positivism sees spontaneous activity, they are very like indeed. They are in that case about equally fanciful, and both directly anti-scientific. Had Comte not been almost as ignorant of the opinions of "the doctors of Germany" as of those of "the thinkers of Central Africa," he would have perceived that modern pantheism was not mere generalised and systematised fetichism, but presupposed some such development of monotheism, metaphysics, and science as that which history shows to have actually occurred.

3. Polytheism he has treated of with fulness, regarding it as the most prolonged of the theological phases. Its rise he attributes to the gradual concentration of fetichism, and to the growth of self-consciousness and will. On the one hand, man necessarily comes in the course of his observation of objects to perceive that they have permanent attributes and relations, and is thus enabled to group them into genera. On the other hand, he also comes to feel his distinctness from nature, to oppose his will to the action of external things, to struggle with the world in order to subdue and utilise it, and to seek auxiliaries in this struggle. In other words, he is led both to consider the qualities common to several objects as independent of each of them, and to separate the Divine from objects, or to refer phenomena to invisible supernatural Wills. Thus fetiches give place to gods who are generalisations personified, matter being thenceforth looked on as inert, objects as passive. In this process of transition the working of the metaphysical spirit already shows itself at once modifying and undermining theology. While Comte deems polytheism inferior to fetichism as a religion, he fully recognises it to have been much more favourable to intellectual culture. He points out with remarkable insight and ingenuity how it contributed to the rise and development of science, art, and industry; and how it was related to the military spirit, priestly influence, slavery, political organisation, &c. All the general portion of his treatment of polytheism—what he calls his "abstract appreciation" of it—is admirable. His "concrete appreciation" of it is the special treatment of what he describes as its three chief forms: the Egyptian, which is conservative and theocratic; the Greek, which is progressive and intellectual; and the Roman, which is also progressive but predominantly military and social. It is also rich in excellent observations and truly philosophical views, but it likewise contains many errors, mostly due to inadequate study of the facts. While its merits, however, are rare and conspicuous, of exceptional value, and of essential significance, its defects are, in general, merely blemishes, more disfiguring than destructive, which may be overlooked or eliminated. When attempting to account for the transition from polytheism to monotheism, Comte falls into some of his worst mistakes.

Nothing need here be said to show how baseless are such hypotheses as that the Jews were a monotheistic colony from Egypt or Chaldea; that Christ was "no extraordinary type of moral perfection," but simply "one of the many adventurers who were constantly making efforts to inaugurate monotheism, and aspiring, like their Greek forerunners, to the honours of personal apotheosis;" and that Paul, "perceiving the useful purpose to which the dawning success of Christ might be turned, voluntarily subordinated himself to Him," and became the true founder of Catholicism.

4. We thus reach the age of Catholic monotheism. Comte shows slight esteem for its monotheistic doctrine, but high admiration of its social spirit and institutions. The claim has been put in for him that he was the first worthily to appreciate the middle age. It is a claim, I need scarcely say, which cannot be seriously maintained. He himself expressly ascribes the honour to those to whom it was more due, the chiefs of the theological school, whose reaction, however, in this as in other respects was but a sign of a general change in the current of European thought, which began in Germany, and only reached France after having passed through England. But although the claim be absurd, and although it be strange that, after Thierry's celebrated account of the rise and spread in France of correct views as to the middle ages, it should have been made, yet Comte is entitled to the honour of having estimated their character and significance on the whole well, and even in some respects better than any of his predecessors. The medieval Church, feudalism, and scholasticism, are appreciated in their general relations and influences with comprehensiveness and truthfulness; and, in fact, all the great systems of speculation and religion belonging to Western Europe down to the Reformation are judged of, so far as they can be regarded merely as historical phenomena, with a fairness and insight surprising in a man whose own views as to speculation and religion were so peculiar. I wish this, however, to be understood as merely a general judgment, and as not inconsistent with the conviction that there are great errors even in his analysis of medieval society. The good accomplished by the Catholic Church in the middle ages cannot be justly ascribed to the extent which he

has done merely to the merits of its organisation and the wisdom of its priesthood. The Christian truth contained in its doctrine must be allowed to have done far more than simply " lent itself to the situation." What Comte admired in the medieval world was its order and discipline; whatever in it tended to establish and preserve the unity of its faith, to discourage doubt, and to repress intellectual and spiritual independence. It owed its greatness in his eyes to its having made faith the first of duties and shown no tolerance to dissenters. In this respect his view of it was as one-sided and reactionary as that of De Maistre; and, in addition, logically most inconsistent, and morally most equivocal, seeing that he had himself no belief in the truth of the doctrine for the support of which he deemed that falsehood and persecution had been laudable.

5. " The theological philosophy and military polity, supreme in antiquity, and modified and enfeebled in the middle age, decline and dissolve in the transitional modern period, in preparation for a new and permanent organic state of society." This traditional modern period is the epoch of that " metaphysical philosophy " which substitutes for deities entities, for personifications abstractions. It is, according to Comte, distinctively a period of negation, criticism, and anarchy. Of its spirit and ideals he shows a cordial dislike. On its chief forces and institutions he seldom looks with an impartial or favourable eye. To the philosophy of the eighteenth century and to Protestantism, for example, he is decidedly unjust, seeing both only on their negative side, and regarding them as stages of a merely critical and destructive movement. There was a great deal more than that to be seen in them. The philosophy of the eighteenth century had serious faults and disastrous consequences; but it also signally promoted principles and ideas of incalculable value. The work which it accomplished was not one of mere negation, or of simple transition, but one which is likely to be as enduring as the future of humanity itself. If Protestantism rejected and discarded much, it was in the interest of truths displaced, disfigured, and almost extinguished by what it renounced; and if it insisted on the rights of reason, it equally insisted

on the claims of legitimate, *i.e.*, reasonable spiritual authority, both divine and human. The reader must not suppose, however, that Comte's treatment of the metaphysical period was exclusively negative and censorious; it was only predominantly so. He has not failed to realise that alongside of the negative movement there was a positive movement, directly tending to and preparing for a definitive and perfect reorganisation; nor did he fail to attempt to indicate its course and results both as an industrial and an intellectual development.

6. In the third or positive stage of history the mind recognises, according to Comte, that it can only know phenomena and their relations of succession and coexistence or laws; that it is vain for it to seek acquaintance with divine volitions, substances, forces, or final causes. His account of this stage is largely also a theory of the future of man. It is to be found in what he regarded as its definitive form in his 'Positivist Catechism,' 'Positivist Calendar,' and especially in the fourth volume of his 'System of Positive Polity.' I have no wish to enter into an examination of the scheme of faith and discipline, of intellectual and industrial, spiritual and social organisation, expounded in these works. I readily admit that there is a good deal which is true and valuable in it; but, as a whole, it seems to me a most monstrous combination of fetichism, scepticism, and catholicism, of sense and folly, of science and sentimental drivel. It assumed as a fundamental truth that belief in the entire subordination of the individual to society, which, more than any other error, vitiated the political philosophy and political practice of classical antiquity, and from which Christianity emancipated the European mind. It proposed to organise the definitive society of the future according to the medieval pattern; to intrust the government of it to a temporal and spiritual power—a patriciate and a clergy—the former centring in a supreme triumvirate, and the latter in a supreme pontiff,—and the two conjointly regulating the whole lives, bodily and mental, affective and active, private and public, in minute conformity to the creed of Comte; and even, while forbidding belief in the existence of God and of the

immortality of the soul, to impose a varied and elaborate worship.[1]

The great aim of Comte in the latest period of his life—*i.e.*, from 1847 until his death in 1857—was to transform his philosophy into a religion, and to apply his religion to the regulation and systematisation of all the activities and institutions of humanity. The doctrine which he inculcated during this period was largely evolved from that which he taught in his earlier and more sober-minded period; but it was also largely a reaction from it, and irreconcilable with it. Dr Bridges, and many other positivists of the so-called orthodox school, have laboured to make out the unity of Comte's life and doctrine. It seems to me that they have failed. They have satisfactorily proved, indeed, "that the conception of an organised spiritual power was not one of Comte's later speculations, but one of his earliest; that social reconstruction was from the first and to the last the dominant motive of his life; and that the 'Philosophie Positive' was consciously wrought out not as an end in itself, but as the necessary basis for a renovated education, the foundation of a new social order." But this has never been

[1] It is when treating of the positivist age and the organisation of the future that Comte expounds what he calls his "fundamental theory of the Great Being" —*i.e.*, Humanity (Pos. Pol., vol. iv. ch. 1). The pretentious way in which he states his conclusions is very characteristic, and their futility is very obvious. "The Great Being" is defined as "the whole constituted by the beings, past, future, and present, which co-operate willingly in perfecting the order of the world;" and more succinctly as "the continuous whole formed by the beings which converge." It is, we are informed, a real and indivisible Being, more distinct and definite than the family or the country, and has laws of its own both internal and external. It does not consist of all human individuals. Its "unworthy parasites in human form" are to be "eliminated"; and it must be judged of by its adult state, which is just "beginning," not by its childhood and adolescence, which we have as yet only before us. Although "every gregarious animal race" answers so far to the definition of "humanity," we are justified in overlooking such races; but we must recognise "as integral portions of the Great Being the animals which voluntarily aid man." Humanity consists chiefly of the dead, who are "the patrons and protectors of the living." "The dead alone can represent humanity; they collectively really constitute humanity; the living, born her children, as a rule become her servants, unless they degenerate into mere parasites." The dead have no objective existence, but they have "a subjective life, which is the true sphere of the soul's superiority." "No amount of superiority, however, can call the subjective life into existence, or give it permanence: for this it is dependent on the objective." It is on the ground of such teaching as this that Comte claims to have developed and completed "the preliminary *aperçus* of Pascal, Leibnitz, and Condorcet."

denied, and is not at all the thesis which they require to establish. The Comtist religion is not to be confounded with the Comtist polity. The chief doctrines of the polity were certainly among the earliest published speculations of Comte, and even if false, are false inferences from the philosophy. It is not so with the chief doctrines of the religion. The polity, as conceived by Comte before the change produced on his mind by his affection for Madame Clotilde de Vaux, aimed at the organisation of society by reason and science. The religion is based on the assumption of the supremacy of imagination and feeling. It enjoins humanity, instead of putting away, to take back the childish things it had outgrown. It undertakes the spiritual organisation of society, while admitting itself to be only a sort of poetical creation, a product of self-illusion. The Comtist polity may thus be regarded as a defective structure insecurely founded on the philosophy. The Comtist religion cannot be regarded as founded on the philosophy at all. Now it admits of no doubt that the doctrines which constitute the religion, as such, are among the latest speculations of Comte, —those which originated in what he characterised as "the revelation of power, purity, genius, and suffering" made to him through Madame de Vaux. It was the inspiration flowing from that revelation which filled him with the ambition of "rendering to his race the services of a St Paul, after having already conferred on it those of an Aristotle."

What are we to think, however, of "the law of the three states" itself? It seems to me that there is a certain measure of truth in it. There are three ways of looking at things, —a religious, a metaphysical, and a scientific. It is natural for the mind to believe that things and the successions of things tell something about a Being in or beyond them with faculties analogous to those which it possesses itself. It is natural for it also to speculate on the reason and mode of the existence of things, and to ask a number of questions about them which cannot be immediately answered from observation of their properties and ascertainment of their relations of coexistence and succession. It is natural for it no less to observe these properties and study these relations. It is natural for it to do all three, and even all three about the same things; in other

words things may be looked at in three aspects. But three aspects are not three successive states. From the fact that it is natural for the mind to look at things in all those three ways, it in no wise follows that it is necessary or even natural to look at them one after another. Nay, just because it is so natural to look at things in all these three ways, it is not natural to suppose that the one mode will be exhausted, gone through, before the other is entered on, but that they will be simultaneous in origin and parallel in development; or at least that the religious and positive will be so, however the metaphysical, as, so to speak, the least natural and imperative, may lag somewhat behind them.

Now, what say the facts? Comte believes that man started with a religion. He attempts a refutation of those who supposed a state prior to all religion, even to fetichism. But, I ask, had man no positive conceptions even then? Did he live by fetichism alone? How could he build a hut, or cook his food, or shoot with precision, otherwise than by attention to the physical properties and relations of things? Without some conceptions identical in kind, however different in degree, with the latest discoveries of positive science, life were impossible. Positive conceptions, then, instead of only beginning in modern times, began with the beginning of human history. And they have been increasing and growing all through it. True generalisations as to the physical properties and relations of things were multiplied and widened by one generation after another in the so-called theological and metaphysical states. Then, as to metaphysics, according to Comte's own account, it pervaded almost the whole theological state. Fetichism passed into polytheism, and polytheism into monotheism, from the impulse of the metaphysical spirit, and under the influence of metaphysical conceptions. And Comte, however inconsistent, is here obviously quite correct. Nothing has so powerfully affected theological development as speculative philosophy; and that such philosophy may flourish at a comparatively early stage of theological development, ancient India and Greece, with their marvellously subtle metaphysics coexisting with the most imaginative of polytheisms, are surely indubitable proofs.

Now, what does this amount to? Why, that Comte has mis-

taken three coexistent states for three successive stages of thought, three aspects of things for three epochs of time. Theology, metaphysics, and positive science, instead of following only one after another, each constituting an epoch, have each pervaded all epochs,—have coexisted from the earliest time to the present day. There has been no passing away of any of them. History cannot be invoked to show that theology and metaphysics are purely of her past domain, merely preparatory for positive science, stages in the interpretation of nature through which the mind required to pass from infancy to maturity. History certifies, on the contrary, that positive science and they began at the same time, that they and it have developed together through all history, and still continue to exist together. Her own birth and theirs were simultaneous, and she has not yet had to record the death of any of them.

But it is said science has been continually gaining, theology and metaphysics continually losing, ground: science has been gradually expelling both theology and metaphysics from one region of knowledge after another, until they will soon have no foot of ground to stand on. I ask, however, for proof of this assertion, and not only cannot find it, but feel confident it cannot be found. There is, indeed, a fact which, confusedly apprehended, has given a certain degree of plausibility to it; but this same fact, correctly apprehended, is really its refutation. The fact I refer to is, that in the early history of the race the three leading aspect of things are not clearly distinguished. Theological, metaphysical, and positive conceptions are commingled—their developments thoroughly entangled; often so commingled and entangled that it is impossible to determine whether they would be better described as bad theology, bad metaphysics, or bad science, being really all three. But the effect of progress here, as everywhere, is differentiation, the increasing separation of things really and properly distinct, the inclusion of each within its own sphere, and consequent exclusion from those of others. Theology is driven more and more out of metaphysics and physics; metaphysics out of theology and physics; and physics no less out of metaphysics and theology.

Comte says fetichism is the first and lowest stage of human development. What, then, precisely is fetichism as described by himself? Just the chaotic union of theological, metaphysical, and positive thought. It may be described equally well either as a physical theology or a theological physics, and it is at the same time obviously a metaphysics, an attribution of vital essences and personal causes as inherent in inanimate things. But thought has come out of this chaos, and how? By the continuous evolution of all the three orders of conceptions, by an ever-growing comprehensiveness and distinctness of vision as to the proper spheres of all three. Each has been gradually emancipating itself from the interference and control of the others. It is not more true that physics began with being theological and metaphysical, than that metaphysics began with being physical and theological, and theology with being physical and metaphysical. The law of the three states is to about the same extent true of all the three developments, only, of course, the arrangement of the states is different in each. It is only in a very general way that it is true of any of them, and in such a way it is, with the necessary change of terms, true of all.

I have no objection, then, to admit that in a very general way the so-called Comtist law of the three states is true of most orders of properly positive conceptions; and I should hold as strongly as Comte himself that every order of properly positive conceptions ought to be freed from the interference and intermixture either of theology or metaphysics. The confusion of either with positive science is illegitimate and mischievous; and the expulsion of them from a domain which is foreign to them must be beneficial to them no less than to the science whose rightful province it is. Now it is only this sort of expulsion, and the restriction consequent on it, which history shows them ever to have met with. In every other way, each advance of science, instead of being a limitation of either, has been an extension of both. So far from metaphysics and theology having been driven from any region of nature by science, no science has arisen without suggesting new questions to the one and affording new data to the other. Each new science brings with it principles which the metaphysician finds it

requisite to submit to an analytic examination, and in which he finds new materials for speculation; and also, in the measure of its success, results in which the theologian finds some fresh disclosure of the thoughts and character of God. Underneath all science there is metaphysics, above all science there is theology; and these three are so related that every advance of science must extend the spheres both of true metaphysics and true theology. Comte has failed entirely to prove that theology and metaphysics are mere passing phases of thought, illusions of the infancy and youth of humanity, which have no sphere of reality corresponding to them. The testimony of history is all the other way; it gives assurance that they have always been, and grounds of hope that they will always be; that they represent real aspects of existence, and respond to eternal aspirations in the human heart.

My reason for holding it true only in a very general way, or, in other words, only very partially true, that positive science has passed through a theological and metaphysical state, must be obvious from what has been already said. There must have been some conceptions positive from the first. It is impossible to conceive of an exclusively theological cooking, hunting, or hut-building; for although many tribes of savage men believe that food and fire, bows and arrows, &c., have souls, they must none the less attend to the positive properties of these things in order to make use of them. There are other conceptions which, although they may or must have been late in being discovered, must yet have been at their discovery apprehended as positive. It is most improbable that either arithmetical or geometrical truths were first apprehended as either theological or metaphysical. It is true that even arithmetical and geometrical truths have been theologically and metaphysically regarded, as by Laotseu, the Pythagoreans, and Eleatics; but in these cases the theology and metaphysics were by subtle efforts of speculative ingenuity associated with, grafted on, positive conceptions. In mathematics, the positive stage is the first, and spontaneous, and only natural stage.

This is so obvious that Comte and his disciples have been unable altogether to ignore it; yet they have, notwithstanding, adhered to their law as if it were unaffected by such facts. A

more inconsistent and futile expedient could not be imagined. By having recourse to it they have exposed themselves to the charge of the crassest ignorance of what is meant by a law of nature. A law which does not apply to a class of phenomena is surely not the law of these phenomena; and even a so-called law, which only *sometimes* or *in part* applies to a class of phenomena, can surely be no true law. The most elementary notion of a law of nature is a rule *without exceptions*—a *uniformity* of connection among coexistent or successive facts. And yet Comte, although maintaining his law of the three states, three mutually exclusive phases of thought, to be *the* law of historical evolution, an invariable and necessary law, can write thus:—

"Properly speaking, the theological philosophy, even in the earliest infancy of the individual and society, has never been strictly universal. That is, the simplest and commonest facts in all classes of phenomena have always been supposed subject to natural laws, and not ascribed to the arbitrary will of supernatural agents. The illustrious Adam Smith has, for example, made the very felicitous remark, that there was to be found in no age or country a god of weight. And even in more complicated cases the presence of law may be recognised whenever the phenomena are so elementary and familiar that the perfect invariability of their relationships of occurrence cannot fail to strike even the least educated observer. As to things moral and social, which some would foolishly exclude from the sphere of positive philosophy, there has necessarily always been a belief in natural laws with regard to the simpler phenomena of daily life—a belief implied in the conduct of the ordinary affairs of existence,—since all foresight would be impossible on the supposition that every incident was due to supernatural agency, and in that case prayer would be the only conceivable means of influencing the course of human actions. It is even noticeable that the principle of the theological philosophy itself lies in the transference to the phenomena of external nature of the first beginnings of the laws of human action; and thus the germ of the positive philosophy is at least as primitive as that of the theological philosophy itself, though it could not expand till a much later time. This idea is very important to the perfect rationality of our sociological theory; because, as human life can never present any real creation, but only a gradual evolution, the final spread of the positive spirit would be scientifically incomprehensible, if we could not trace its rudiments from the very beginning." [1]

[1] Phil. Pos., iv. 491.

I consider these remarks excellent, but excellent as a proof that there is no such law as the so-called law of three states. If they be true, as I have no doubt they are, it cannot possibly be in any recognised or proper sense of the term *the* law, the fundamental law of history; it can at the most be only the law of some historical phenomena which Comte should have carefully discriminated from other phenomena, in order not to impose on himself and his readers a secondary and special in place of a primary and general law. If true, he was logically bound entirely to recast his statement of his supposed law, and to acknowledge that, if a law at all, it was by no means one so important as he had at first imagined. He failed to take this course, and involved himself, in consequence, in obvious self-contradictions on which I need not insist, as they have been clearly pointed out by many of his critics.[1]

II.

Auguste Comte left behind him a school of disciples who accepted his system in its entirety,—its philosophy, polity, and religion. The head of this school, the immediate successor of Comte, and the present pontiff of "the religion of humanity," is M. Pierre Laffitte. He is a learned man, well acquainted with the sciences in favour among positivists, and intimately conversant with the doctrine in which he believes that social salvation can alone be found. He has earnestly laboured to propagate the creed and realise the aims of his master. He has written some works which expound and so far supplement and develop the historical theories of Comte, but which do not substantially add to them. A mere reference to these works will, I think, be sufficient.[2]

[1] See Prof. Shield's 'Philosophia Ultima,' vol. i., pt. ii., ch. ii., pp. 287-314; Prof. Caird's 'Social Philosophy of Comte,' &c.

[2] 'Cours philosophique sur l'histoire générale de l'humanité,' 1859; 'Les grands types de l'humanité,' 1874-75; 'Considérations générales sur l'ensemble de la civilisation chinoise,' 1861; and the outlines of his lectures on "the third philosophy" in the 'Rev. Occid.' for 1886 and 1887. The 'Revue Occidentale,' the official organ of the positivist priesthood, is a bi-monthly publication, and has appeared since May 1878. A chair of General History of the Sciences has been created for M. Laffitte at the "Collége de France."

There is, further, an extreme positivist party, a so-called "party of strict observance." In the eyes of its members M. Laffitte is deficient in zeal, orthodoxy, and priestliness. They accept Comte's wildest absurdities as precious certainties, and would rigidly obey all his injunctions. They are, besides, very irascible, and much given to impute bad motives to those whose faith does not coincide with their own. Drs Audiffrent, Robinet, and Sémérie are representatives of the French section of these positivist puritans. The way in which they assailed those who stated and proved the harmless and easily verifiable historical fact that Comte's "law of the three states" was not an altogether original discovery, is too characteristic of their party.

Far the most eminent of Comte's disciples in France was the late Émile Littré (1801-1881). By the orthodox positivists he was fanatically hated, and, no doubt conscientiously, habitually calumniated. What unprejudiced persons could only have ascribed to his love of truth, they unhesitatingly attributed to hatred of Comte. He seems to me to have shown himself as loyal to Comte as loyalty to conscience would allow him to be. He did more than all the orthodox positivists combined have done to recommend and diffuse what was true or plausible in the doctrine of Comte. A wonderful amount of admirable work was accomplished by this modest, indefatigable, most virtuous, and highly gifted man. Much of it, and the best part of it, however, owed little or nothing to Comte, although he himself thought otherwise. His philosophy only was derived from Comte. And that as a general doctrine I require neither to expound nor criticise.[1] But I must, of course, consider the account which he gives of "the law of the three states," and his attempt to improve on it.

He at first accepted it just as it had been presented by Comte. But in his 'Paroles de philosophie positive,' published in 1859, he maintained that, although it must be held to be a

[1] For a masterly exposition and criticism of it, see Caro's 'M. Littré et le Positivisme,' 1883. The positivism of Littré had for its literary organ 'La Philosophie Positive,' a review founded in 1867, and which appeared until the close of 1883. Among its most active contributors were, besides Littré, Wyrouboff, Robin, Naquet, De Roberty, &c.

true law, the discovery of which had founded sociology, it was only an empirical law, a mere general statement of historical fact; and accordingly, he proposed to substitute for it a law of four states, as at once of a deeper and more comprehensive character, as inclusive of Comte's law, and entitled, in consequence of explaining the development of humanity by the development of the individual mind, to the designation of rational. In his much more important work, 'Auguste Comte,' published four years later, he confessed to have discovered in the interval that a law very similar to that which he had proposed had been enunciated by Saint-Simon so far back as 1808. Still maintaining, however, the great importance and substantial originality of his own conception, he not only adhered to his criticism of the Comtian law, but greatly extended it. He denied that that law applied to the development of industry, morality, or art; and affirmed that it held true only of the development of science. "This criticism," he says, "I uphold; however, I wish not to be misunderstood and supposed to reject the law of the three states. I do not reject it, I restrict it. So long as we keep within the scientific order, and consider the conception of the world as at first theological, then metaphysical, and finally, positive, the law of the three states retains all its validity for the guidance of historical speculations. . . . But all that is in history is not confined within the scientific order. M. Comte, who has somewhere said that we must suppose some notions to have been always neither theological nor metaphysical, has indicated the germ, I shall not say of my objection, but of my restriction. In fact, the law of the three states applies neither to the industrial development, nor to the moral development, nor to the æsthetic development."[1] The law which Littré imagined to comprehend and supplement that of Comte, he stated thus: "It seems to me that history is divisible into four fundamental ages: the most ancient is that in which humanity is under the preponderating sway of its wants and appetites; the next, or age of religions, is that in which the development of the moral nature produces civil and religious creations; the third, or age of art, is that in which the sense of the beautiful, become in its

[1] 'Auguste Comte,' pp. 49, 50.

turn, capable of gratification, gives rise to æsthetic constructions and poems; finally, the fourth age, or age of science, is that in which reason, ceasing to be exclusively exercised in the accomplishment of the three foregoing functions, works for itself and proceeds in the search after abstract truth."

I much prefer Comte's law of the three states to the one thus formulated by Littré. Certainly the latter is remarkably similar to that which Saint-Simon had laid down half a century earlier, when he maintained that the development, both of the race and of the individual, might be divided into four stages—viz., 1st, Infancy, characterised by delight in construction and handiwork; 2d, Puberty, characterised by artistic aspirations; 3d, Manhood, characterised by military ambition; and 4th, Age, characterised by the love of science. Of course, Littré has endeavoured to show that his law is much superior to that proposed by Saint-Simon. It seems to me that there is very little to choose between them; and, indeed, that both are so bad that it would be mere labour lost to try to ascertain which is best or worst. Every so-called law which represents the elements of consciousness as taking what is colloquially called *turn about* in ruling the historical evolution, one element being the superior principle in one age of the world, and another in another, is utterly unsatisfactory. And the reason of this is that all such laws implicitly contradict the truth which Comte had the wisdom to lay down as the very corner-stone of his historical philosophy.

Believing as he did the continuous homogeneousness of the collective movement of humanity to be an indispensable presupposition to the construction of a philosophy of history, he could not have failed to be astounded at any one who denied it fancying he nevertheless accepted his philosophy of history on the whole. Such is, however, the position taken up by Littré, when he maintains that the law of the three states regulates only the intellectual, or, as he generally calls it, the scientific development; and that expressly on the ground that the industrial, moral, and æsthetic developments are separate from, and antecedent to, the intellectual development, instead of being, as Comte so strongly insisted, dependent on, correspondent to, and contemporaneous with it. Comte had

a clear recognition of the truth that the special developments of human activity are not successive epochs of history. Littré's distinctive theory affirms that they are so. To me Littré seems entirely wrong, and Comte thoroughly right.

Littré believed his law to have the advantage over Comte's of being not only empirical but rational. Comte, however, held the law of the three states to be rational as well as empirical. He has explicitly and repeatedly argued that it can be reached by deduction no less than by induction, and is not merely a description of the ascertained course of human events, a general statement of historical fact, but a law of which the *a priori reason* is known, and which is the expression not simply of what has happened, but of what, from the very nature of the human mind, must have happened. In contrasting the law of the three states with a law of four states as an empirical with a rational law, Littré overlooked both the direct claims made by Comte on behalf of the first-mentioned law, and the numerous passages in which he attempted to assign its logical, moral, and social grounds. He may have failed to prove it to be rationally or philosophically necessary; but he certainly took much more trouble in endeavouring to do so than Littré himself took in connection with the alleged law of four states.

It is only necessary further to remark that the law of the three states so restricted as Littré would restrict it cannot possibly be a fundamental law of history. If it be, as he represents it, empirical in character in the humblest sense of the term, and confined to a single sphere of human activity, and to one of the four ages of history, it can only be at the most a law of secondary importance, and the pretensions put forth by Comte in connection with it, and unanimously and enthusiastically endorsed by his disciples, must have been highly extravagant. However, even after all his admissions and restrictions, instead of confessing that what Comtists had hitherto so exultingly proclaimed as the greatest, most fundamental, most distinctive discovery of their master, the so-called central law of social evolution as much as gravitation is of the solar system, had been found to be a very imperfect and incomplete achievement, the recognition of a mere fragment or section

of the truth, Littré showed himself quite unconscious that any such confession was needed.

The mode of thought which found expression in the naturalism of Charles Comte and the positivism of Auguste Comte became the predominant one in France. For nearly half a century it has been more prevalent and powerful than any other. We can see the effects of it everywhere,—in the tone of society, in the conduct of life, in politics, in poetry and other arts, in fiction, and in the aims and efforts of science and speculation. But this is largely owing to its having escaped from the confinement of a particular philosophical school, and dissociated itself from any very definite or much developed doctrine. The positivism which now prevails in France and elsewhere, is indistinguishable from naturalism, experientialism, and materialism; is indefinitely variable in its forms; and is pledged only to the acknowledgment of a few rather vague general principles. It is little more than a mode of thought, a tendency of spirit. Its most obvious characteristic is its distrust of all pretensions to the possession of absolute truth; its aversion to all belief in the supersensuous; its contentment with a reference of phenomena of any kind to antecedent and contiguous phenomena as an adequate elucidation. Positivism thus understood has penetrated into all departments of history, and made its influence strongly felt within them all.

It has undoubtedly contributed to the spread and enlargement of historical study; but it has also, I think, considerably biassed and depraved it. The positivist spirit necessarily looks at all things historically, and treats as history whatever can be so treated; but it also naturally loves to attach itself specially to the consideration of those sections or phases of human history which it can most easily represent as being developments of merely natural history, and from which it can most plausibly conclude that there is no essential and immutable truth in thought, religion, or morality. This largely accounts for the predilection which writers imbued with it have shown for anthropology, ethnology, prehistoric archæology, and the comparative study of religions and of languages, as well as for

a want of scientific impartiality too often apparent in their works. M. Hovelacque, Lefèvre, Letourneau, Topinard, E. Véron, and many others, might be referred to in proof and illustration of the statement. The treatises which they have produced in the departments of historical study mentioned, although in various respects highly useful and meritorious, are far from being uniformly trustworthy, the anti-theological and anti-metaphysical fanaticism of their authors having frequently led them not only to draw their conclusions hastily, but to collect their data uncritically.

The power of the positivist and naturalist tendencies of the age has made itself deplorably conspicuous in France, by giving rise to a school or rather generation of *littérateurs* whose ambition has been to make even their novels studies in natural history, delineations of individual and social existence, from which all spiritual elements and ethical motives have been carefully eliminated, while bestial passions and physiological or pathological laws are exhibited as the sole springs of human action, the forces which really sway human nature. That it should also have shown itself in the transformation of certain disciplines which had previously been treated as theoretical or practical into historical was what was to be expected. The most striking example, perhaps, of a change of this kind, is that which was mainly effected by Sainte-Beuve in literary criticism.

Charles August Sainte-Beuve (1804-69) must be acknowledged to have been among the most eminent of the literary critics of the present century, even if we restrict the signification of literary criticism to appreciation of the phenomena or products of literature; for incessant and comprehensive study, and the varied and careful culture of a pliant and penetrating judgment and delicate æsthetic sensibilities, had given him a vast and exquisite familiarity with the achievements of art through the instrumentality of language. He was, however, even more an historian than a critic; occupied himself more with authors than their books. Each literary work seemed to him to be a product of mind only capable of being understood by a study of the character, genius, temperament, bodily constitution, education, ancestry, race, country, and intellectual, moral, and social

surroundings of the individual who produced it. Such is the positivist method as it was applied to criticism by a man of fine taste and rare talent, and applied in the freest and most genial way, without any systematic exclusiveness or dogmatic narrowness. It may, perhaps, be justly held that the method was at times unfavourable even to Sainte-Beuve's work as a critic; and that, in that capacity, he would not infrequently have been more profitably occupied in the direct study of the writings under his examination than in the collection of biographical and historical data, with the hope of being thereby able to throw a fuller light on them than that which they possessed in themselves. But it cannot be doubted that, owing to his predilection for the method, we have in his 'Portraits Littéraires,' 'Causeries du Lundi,' and 'Nouveaux Causeries,' taken collectively, one of the richest contributions made to history, and especially to literary history, by any single individual in this age. His 'Histoire of Port-Royal' (6 vols.) is not merely a complete account of the famous Jansenist community immortalised by the genius and piety of the Arnaulds, of Saint-Cyran, Pascal, De Sacy, and their friends, but the most brilliant and instructive representation yet given of the religious life of France in the days of Louis XIV.

The late M. Renan (1823-92) entertained a very poor opinion of A. Comte and his philosophy. He was of too tolerant a temperament and too familiar with doubts and difficulties to have any sympathy with a nature so arrogant and dogmatic. He was too learned to be able to overlook Comte's ignorance of historical and other facts which he pretended to reduce under rigid laws. He had too delicate a perception of the fitnesses of things not to be shocked by the want of common-sense and ordinary foresight shown in many of the doctrines and prophecies of the founder of "the religion of humanity." A writer of the lightest and deftest touch, master of a style so simple and graceful that it never ceases to charm and enliven the reader, he naturally regarded the strong and original but lumbering and overloaded sentences of Comte as "bad French." He rejected "the law of the three states," and, so far as I know, all Comte's other laws, as generalisations faulty in excess; and he thought

that such truths as he had expressed, Descartes, Voltaire, D'Alembert, and others, had uttered before him in more appropriate language.

Yet M. Renan may, without any substantial injustice, be numbered among positivists. He discarded theology and metaphysics as entirely as Comte. Only positive science, he held, could supply men with the truths without which life would be insupportable and science impossible. He believed in the ideal but not in the supernatural; in God and Providence, but as "categories of thought." What may be called his pantheism is neither more nor less inconsistent with positivism than was Comte's ascription of self-activity to matter, and of divinity to humanity; it was a belief that there is a latent living reason in everything, and that in the course of millions of years the universe may evolve an absolute consciousness, and so bring forth God, although there is at present no trace either in nature or history of any will higher than the human.

History has been Renan's favourite department of study; and in historical study he has sought to employ the method of the natural sciences. He early saw, and set forth with admirable clearness of view and statement, the fact that nature has had a history as well as humanity, and that evolution is a conception of fundamental significance both in the physical and human sphere. At the same time he rejected fatalism and necessitarianism, accepting the belief in freedom as sufficiently attested by consciousness. Nor can he be charged with having identified the physical and the spiritual, or having unduly subordinated the latter to the former, as so many positivists and naturalists have done. On the contrary, it is one of his chief merits to have clearly seen that history must be explained from within, not from without. No one has more fully recognised that it cannot be justly considered to have been understood until it has yielded a psychology of humanity—*i.e.*, led to a scientific knowledge of the formation and growth of consciousness, or of the development of mind, on earth. His predilection for the study of languages and of religions was intimately connected with his interest in human nature and his sense of the importance of a psychology of humanity. Languages and religions are the clearest and most truthful mirrors of the mind and heart of

man. They are those products of the human spirit from which the elements of a comparative psychology, a psychology entitled to be regarded as the fundamental historical science, may be most easily and abundantly drawn.

The 'Histoire Générale des Langues Semitiques,' 1855,—the best, I think, of all M. Renan's writings,—is to a large extent a study in comparative psychology, an attempt to delineate the characteristics of the Semitic race. It was meant to have been completed by a Comparative Grammar of the Semitic Languages, which never appeared, possibly because the task contemplated —namely, the unfolding of "the *internal* history of these languages, the organic development of their processes, their comparative grammar viewed not as an immutable, but as a subject of incessant changes,"—was found too difficult of accomplishment. It is at least a task which remains unaccomplished, no German orientalist even having as yet taken it in hand, and the work on Semitic Comparative Grammar of the late Prof. Wright being merely linguistic, without any direct historical or psychological interest. Many of the views first expressed in the 'Histoire Générale' he found occasion to reiterate and develop in his subsequent publications.

His delineation of the Semitic mind must not be judged of as an attempt exactly to portray actual reality, but as one merely meant to convey a generally correct impression of a type of character more commonly manifested in the Semitic group of peoples than in those of any co-ordinate group. Through overlooking this, his critics have often interpreted his statements too absolutely, and censured them unjustly. In my opinion, he has rightly attributed to the Semites a peculiar genius for religion; rightly maintained their inferiority to the Aryans as regards both imagination and speculation; and rightly indicated how their inferiority in these respects favoured their attainment of a simpler, more elevated, and more ethical idea of the Divine. He has well shown how the Semitic mind is at once reflected in Semitic speech, and restricted by its imperfections as an instrument of thought, the Semitic languages being in vocables, inflections, qualifying and copulative terms, as a rule, far poorer, more mechanical in their applications, and more limited in their capabilities, than the Aryan, while the words

themselves are more sensuous, less ideal. Notwithstanding errors of detail, he has, on the whole, correctly as well as strikingly delineated the general features of the Semitic character and genius in the chief spheres of human life,—in practical affairs, in political conduct, in literature, in art, in science, in philosophy, and in religion. The attempts which have been made by Steinthal, Max Müller, Grau, Hommel, Von Kremer, Nöldeke, Le Bon, Fairbairn, and others, to trace these features, have been so far due to the interest excited by that of Renan, and but for it would have been of less value than they are. The results at which they have arrived, although, perhaps, more definite and developed than his, seem to me to be for the most part substantially the same.

While Renan has represented races as important factors in history, and specially endeavoured to show how the mental characteristics of one of those races have manifested themselves therein and affected the destinies of humanity, he cannot be fairly charged with having sought to explain history merely by the principle of races, or with having treated races as species, their aptitudes as exclusive properties, and their influences as necessary and invariable. He has so repeatedly expressed himself to a contrary effect, so fully recognised the derivative and modifiable nature of race, that this common misrepresentation of his teaching is hardly excusable.

His celebrated hypothesis attributing to the Semitic race a monotheistic instinct, generated by living in the solitude of the desert, can certainly not be accepted strictly or literally. Comparative psychology has nowhere found an instinct or faculty which is the exclusive possession of any one portion of humanity. A vast sandy desert could never of itself impress on the human mind an idea of the oneness of God. All the Semitic peoples have been at some time or other polytheists, and several of them were never monotheists. But these admissions do not dispose of the hypothesis. Fairly interpreted, M. Renan will not be found to have meant by a monotheistic instinct more than a tendency towards monotheism, or, more precisely, more than a mode of conceiving of the Divine favourable to monotheism. Although it is far from certain that the childhood of the Semites was spent in the desert, it can hardly be doubted that just as the manifold-

ness and wealth of nature around the early Aryans must have contributed greatly to their looking upon nature and its processes in a way which led them both to their polytheism and their pantheism, so the surroundings of the early Semites equally favoured the rise and growth of the simpler and sterner faith which their names for the Divine clearly attest that they held before they separated and became distinct peoples. Renan was not only fully aware of, but freely accepted, the facts as to Semitic polytheism; and he could consistently do so, inasmuch as he had never assigned to the early Semites a distinct, much less a developed monotheism, but merely an undefined germinal monotheism, which consisted simply in a vague consciousness of the Divine powers or Elohim as undivided, separate from the world and man, and essentially superior to them. The oldest and most prevalent Semitic names for the Divine are sufficient to prove that long before the Semites had any written records, they had a conception of the Divine markedly distinct from the corresponding conception among the Aryans, and one which tended more towards monotheism.

M. Renan claimed to have "the facility of reproducing in himself the intuitions of past ages,"—" the faculty of comprehending states very different from that in which we live." And it must be admitted that he really possessed such a facility or faculty in an exceptional degree. His mental organisation was at all points sensitive and sympathetic; it was readily and delicately responsive to very varied kinds of impressions. He was quick to perceive the beauty, to divine the truth, and to appreciate the good, presented in many forms, and under many disguises and corruptions. Yet this fine gift, this enviable power, was far from perfect. It partook of the limits and defects of his nature, which, with all its eminent and attractive qualities, lacked depth and earnestness, was more æsthetic than moral, more finely cultured than seriously religious. He was a stranger to the spiritual experiences without which great religions, their prophets and apostles, and even their doctrines and practices, cannot be understood adequately, and from within. And he did not so understand them. Scholarly and ingenious, always interesting and in many respects valuable, and inimitably graceful in diction, as are his volumes on the Origins of Chris-

tianity and the History of Israel, they are somewhat superficial, inasmuch as they have grown less out of realisation of the inner history or life-development of Christianity and of Israel than out of a critical interest in intricate historical problems and an artistic interest in subjects admirably adapted for effective delineation.

For Renan philosophy was simply a noble style of thinking, and religion but a superior kind of poetry. Absolute truth and goodness he regarded as only ideals, to be sought merely for the pleasure of seeking them; and their appearances he deemed wholly relative and ever varying. Hence he disliked decided affirmations and negations, and delighted in *nuances* of thought and expression suggestive of the uncertainty and illusoriness which must prevail in a world of which the universal law is "an eternal *fieri*." He had temptations, which less richly endowed artistic natures are spared, to sacrifice critical rigour and historical precision to beauty of form, and to supply from imagination what was wanting in facts to make a picture lifelike or a story dramatic. But if sometimes led astray by the characteristic qualities of his genius, he was also enabled by them to render to the studies to which he devoted himself services far beyond the power of men of mere talent and learning to confer. His works lack merits which those of Reuss, Pressensé, and Réville possess, but they have a greater vitality, originality, and charm, and have exercised a far wider influence.[1]

Not a few of my readers may think that Renan should not have been treated of in the present chapter. But that M. Taine should have a place in it no one will dispute; for there can be no doubt as to which camp he belongs to. "La vérité," accord-

[1] M. Renan's philosophical views are to be found chiefly in his 'Dialogues et Fragments Philosophiques' and 'L'Avenir de la Science.' The extraordinary conception of a gradual growth and organisation of God, *évolution déifique,* which he sets forth in the former of these works, is a sort of counterpart to Comte's dogma of the Virgin-Mother, which some of his followers regard as the central article of the Positivist religious creed. Renan has been to a considerable extent his own biographer. See his 'Souvenirs d'Enfance et de Jeunesse,' &c. Sir Mounstuart E. Grant Duff gives a very appreciative estimate of his character as a man, and a very comprehensive view of his activity as an author, in 'Ernest Renan—In Memoriam,' 1893.

ing to M. Renan, "réside tout entière dans les nuances." If such be the case, M. Taine obviously knows nothing about "la vérité." "Les nuances" are not at all in his line. Indefiniteness and indecision are faults of which he is entirely guiltless. On the contrary, he is in his own way as one-sided and dogmatic, as confident and uncompromising, as were our Scotch Covenanters of the seventeenth century in their Calvinistic and Presbyterian fashion. He is a thorough-going experimentalist, starting from sensation, and explaining all things by a mechanically necessitated evolution. While philosophically more akin to Littré than to any other older French thinker, he is still more closely related, perhaps, to our British empiricists the Mills and Dr Bain, and to our British evolutionists Darwin and Spencer. His great distinction as a man of letters, his vigour as a thinker, his scientific culture, his laborious industry in historical research, and the zeal which he has shown for psychological study, have made him the most eminent representative of contemporary French experimentalism. M. Th. Ribot, editor of the 'Revue Philosophique,' and many of the contributors to that invaluable periodical, honour him as their chief.

M. Taine has said that "virtue and vice are to be regarded as products, just like sugar and vitriol;" and that "man may be considered as an animal of a superior species, who manufactures poems very much as silk-worms make their cocoons and bees their hives." These rather unguarded words have been probably more frequently quoted than any others which he has written; and because of them he has often been represented as identifying chemistry and morality, and as attempting to study history as a physical or physiological process. I shall not do him the injustice of attributing to him anything so absurd. He is, of course, quite aware that virtues and vices cannot be subjected to the same tests and processes as chemical substances; that poets are a very superior species of creature indeed to silk-worms and bees, which by no means differ so peculiarly from one another as Shakespeare from Béranger, or Milton from Alfred de Musset; and that the instruments and artifices employed by us in the investigation of cocoons or hives would not help us to explain

or appreciate Spenser's "Fairy Queen" or Tennyson's "In Memoriam." He can only have meant that moral and social facts should be studied according to the same general method as those of a physical and physiological kind, and that the history of humanity will never be truly described or elucidated if the precautions and rules which all successful inquirers into the history of nature recognise to be imperative are neglected or violated; and this is what few will deny. He has certainly not shown himself capable, any more than have other inquirers, of studying psychological phenomena otherwise than psychologically, *i.e.*, through consciousness and psychical (not physical) analysis.

Most of M. Taine's works are of a psychologico-historical character. That by which he made his *début* in literature—the 'Essai sur Tite Live,' crowned by the French Academy in 1855, and published in 1856—is of this nature. It traces "the conditions of light and liberty" in which the mind of Livy was developed; indicates the sources of his information and the examples which inspired and guided him; examines and appreciates his work from three points of view—the critical, philosophical, and artistic; and endeavours to determine and formulate the essential character of his genius. While Livy is its central and main subject, its general theme is history itself; and so it is divided into two "parts,"—the first devoted to "history considered as a science," and the second to "history considered as an art." In dealing with history as a science, M. Taine treats of historical criticism in itself, and as exemplified in the writings of Livy, Beaufort, and Niebuhr, and of the philosophy of history in general, and as traceable in the works of Livy, Machiavelli, and Montesquieu. In discoursing of history as an art he has comparatively little to say of historical art as such, but his characterisation of the historical art of Livy is strikingly just and brilliant. In the conclusion of the work he sets forth an idea which has reappeared in almost all his subsequent writings: the idea, namely, that the character or genius of a man, as also of a society or a nation, may be summed up in a formula, owing to that character or genius being an organic unity all the parts of which are interdependent, and act according to a unique law under the influence of a single dominant principle, *une faculté*

maîtresse. His formula for Livy is: "His oratorical genius, accordant with his character, which is that of a patriot and a man of honour, Roman like his character, explains all else." This, he holds, sums up Livy, and explains his work; so expresses his nature and the law of his activity that what he was as a man and accomplished as an historian may be deduced or construed from it. M. Taine himself has, however, neither deduced nor construed anything from it. He has not even been able to state it in a self-consistent form, but in one which manifestly implies, if it does not explicitly state, that Livy's oratorical genius presupposed, and was conditioned by, the very character which it is alleged to explain.

In 1857 his 'Philosophes Français du xixe Siècle' appeared. It showed that he was already a decided ideologist, a lineal successor of Condillac and De Tracy, who had been enthusiastically studying physical science, and was in full sympathy with the naturalistic tendencies of the time. His criticism of Eclecticism and its chief representatives was in some respects just, superabounded in force, and displayed a characteristic lack of comprehensiveness of vision and moderation of judgment. It is at once the strength and the weakness of M. Taine that he must always study not simply to know but also to prove a thesis, and that he so concentrates his mind on the proof of his thesis that he loses sight of everything in his subject which does not serve his purpose: this, one might almost say, is his *faculté maîtresse.* In the last two chapters of the work he set forth views as to method which he has since somewhat more fully developed. The 'Essais de Critique et d'Histoire' appeared in the following year. All the studies contained in this volume are able and interesting, and exemplify the method which their author regarded as fitted to disclose the natural history of the soul in an individual or nation. The preface is a defence of the method against the criticisms of Sainte-Beuve, Prévost-Paradol, and others. It is, however, in the introduction to his great work, the 'Histoire de la Littérature Anglaise' (5 vols., 1864), that we find the most explicit and matured statement of his theory of history.

It is to the following effect. In historical study documents

are to be regarded only as a clue to the reconstruction of the visible or outer man, and he only as a clue to the discovery of the inner invisible man. The state and actions of this latter man have their causes in certain general modes of thought and feeling,—certain characteristics of the intellect and the heart common to men of one race, age, and country. The mechanism of human history is always the same. The mainspring is constantly some very general disposition of mind and soul, innate and attached by nature to the race, or acquired and produced by some circumstance acting on the race; and it produces its effects inevitably and gradually, bringing a nation into a succession of conditions, religious, literary, social, economic, sometimes good, sometimes bad, acting sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly, and so forth. The whole progress of each distinct civilisation may thus be regarded as the effect of a permanent force, which, at every stage, varies its operation by modifying the circumstances of its action. There are three primordial forces which by their combination produce a civilisation and all its transformations through the ages by a succession of natural and necessitated impulses: the *race*, the *medium*, and the *moment*. Race includes the innate and hereditary dispositions which man brings with him into the world, which are, as a rule, united with marked differences in the temperament and structure of the body, and which vary with various peoples. The *medium* comprises all physical and social circumstances and surroundings. Besides the forces within and without, there is the work which they have already produced together, and which itself contributes to produce that which follows. This work is the *moment*, or epoch, the momentum acquired at a given period, and resulting from the permanent impulse and the medium in which it has operated. These primordial forces produce a system of effects which is a civilisation in its various stages. "History is a mechanical problem; the total effect is a result, depending entirely on the magnitude and direction of the producing causes. The only difference which separates it from a purely physical problem is that it cannot be measured or computed by the same means, or defined in an exact or approximative formula. As in both, however, the

matter is the same, equally made up of forces, magnitudes, and directions, we may say that in both the final result is produced after the same method."

In history, as everywhere, the law of the mutual dependence, or correlation of parts, holds an important place. "As in an animal, instincts, teeth, limbs, bony structure and muscular envelope, are mutually connected, so that a change in one produces a corresponding change in the rest, and a skilful naturalist can by a process of reasoning reconstruct out of a few fragments almost the whole body; even so in a civilisation, religion, philosophy, the organisation of the family, literature, the arts, make up a system in which every local change induces a general change, so that an experienced historian, studying some particular portion of it, sees in advance and half predicts the rest." Hence one great phase or fact of history thoroughly understood is sufficient to enable us to understand those concomitant with it, and largely to anticipate the future. The main work of the historian is, accordingly, to determine what moral condition produced a given literature, philosophy, society, or act, and how the race, the medium, and the moment, produced that condition.

History is psychology developing itself in time and space. It may be best studied in the documents which bring human sentiments and their evolution most clearly and fully to light; and these are just those which constitute literature. It is chiefly by the study of literature that one may construct a history of mind and gain a knowledge of the psychological laws from which events spring. "In this respect a great poem, a fine novel, the confessions of a man of genius, are more instructive than a crowd of historians with their pile of histories. I would give fifty volumes of charters, and a hundred volumes of diplomatic documents, for the Memoirs of Cellini, the Epistles of St Paul, Luther's Table-Talk, or the Comedies of Aristophanes. . . . Literature resembles those admirable apparatuses of extraordinary sensibility by which physicians disentangle and measure the most obscure and delicate changes of a body. Constitutions and religions do not approach it in importance; the articles of a code of laws and of a creed only show us the spirit roughly and without delicacy."

It was in order to exhibit the psychology of the English people in the various stages through which it has passed, and to show how, in accordance with the theory of historical development just indicated, these stages were naturally and inevitably evolved, how great political, religious, and literary works were produced, and how the Saxon barbarian was transformed into the Englishman of the present day, that M. Taine wrote his 'History of English Literature.' By the way in which he performed the task he has rendered both France and England greatly his debtor. There is no other history of the subject which displays so much talent and the same combination of excellences. It is everywhere characterised by freshness and independence of thought, brilliancy and vigour of style, and fulness and accuracy of information. It is eminently successful in almost all respects except one—namely, the proof of the theory on which it proceeds. As regards that, it is a signal failure. Sometimes, indeed, M. Taine is to be seen in it struggling vaguely and spasmodically to establish the theory he had laid down, and he is still oftener to be heard proclaiming that he has succeeded; but he brings it to a close without any real fulfilment of his promise.

For such assertions as that all events are necessitated, that history is simply a mechanical problem, and that freewill is an illusion, he produces no evidence. These assertions, although the very foundations of his theory, are allowed to remain to the end of his work the mere assumptions which they were at its commencement. They are metaphysical dogmas only capable of being proved, if provable at all, by metaphysical reasonings; certainly not by historical research. M. Taine seems to think their truth so manifest that to attempt any kind of proof of them, or even to answer the most obvious objections to them, is unnecessary.

He has equally failed to make out that either the individual or the collective mind is like a machine or an organism ruled by a central and dominant force from which all the other forces may be inferred, and by which its whole activity may be explained; and that, accordingly, the entire character and work of a man or a nation may be summed up in a formula which indicates the chief motive, principle, or distinctive quality of that man or

nation. There is no machine or organism of the kind. Even a timepiece is not explicable merely by its mainspring. To affirm that "man is a walking formula" may be tolerable as a joke, but it is execrable as a definition, and ludicrous as a philosophical thesis. M. Taine would improve his admirable study on Shakespeare were he to leave out the meaningless paragraph in which he pretends to resolve "the whole genius" of the great dramatist into "a complete imagination." All paragraphs of the same kind in his work,—*e.g.*, those referring to the spring- (*ressort*) Milton, the spring-Macaulay, the spring-Dickens, the spring-Carlyle, &c., are equally worthless. Fortunately they are far fewer than his theory logically requires, easily separable from the rest of the book, and too manifestly futile to mislead an intelligent reader. So far as I know, they have not misled—that is, convinced—a single mortal.

The three causes which, according to M. Taine, originate history and determine its form and development are unquestionably real and influential historical factors; yet they are not so powerful as he represents them to be. They are not the only causes which act on history, and they are improperly asserted to be "primordial." Behind and beneath the acquired peculiarities of *the race* are the essential and universal qualities of *the man*. This *man*, to whom M. Taine's theory does such scant justice, yet to whom belongs the reason, will, conscience, and feelings common to all races, is the prime and main agent in history, and its sole subject. How he was differentiated into races is itself a difficult historical problem. The *medium*, in so far as it is social, is wholly of human formation, and largely so even as physical, wherever man is an active historical agent. The *moment* is only another name for history itself at a given time; and cannot cause or account for itself. Race, medium, and moment, therefore, far from being the primordial sources of historical explanation, need to be either wholly or largely historically explained.

Further, M. Taine should not merely have insisted that each people is an organism, and the history of each people an organic development; he should also have sufficiently explained what that meant. It is easier to understand what a society or nation is, than to recognise how it is an organism; and what history is,

than wherein its organic development consists. In order not to be chargeable with explaining the *ignotum* by the *ignotius*, our author, instead of being content merely to carry the terms and notions of "organism" and "organic development" from biology over into sociology, from natural history over into human history, should have also shown what changes in signification they underwent in the transference. He has made no serious attempt of the kind; and that obviously because he has not clearly seen how great are the differences between individual and social organisms—between wholes in which each part is merely a part, and wholes in which each part is a free and rational individual. While there are relations between the civilisation, religion, philosophy, and literature, &c., of a nation, just as there are between the various organs and members of an animal, they are relations of a very different kind, and change in a very different manner. Prevision is consequently much more difficult in the case of the historian than of the naturalist. It has to be observed, also, that humanity, if an organism, is most unlike other organisms, in that it is single and unique, whereas they are multiple and reducible to classes. Its history is a whole of which all particular histories are merely sections, or stages, or phases.

M. Taine's 'History of English Literature' is in the main of a truly psychological nature; it exhibits the operation not of his so-called primordial forces but of the actual proximate mental causes. To this happy inconsistency it owes much of its value. Unquestionably it is an important contribution to comparative psychology. Yet not more so than Renan's 'History of the Semitic Languages.' Literature regarded as a source of comparative psychology is by no means so superior to language or religion as M. Taine supposes. Literature, indeed, is the fullest revelation of the minds of certain men; but it is not as direct a revelation as language or history of collective mind, the mind of races and nations. No History of English Literature can be an exhibition of the mind of the English people, or of more than the minds of English men of letters. To attribute to the English mind any quality of the genius of Shakespeare or Byron is a fallacious procedure, if it have no other warrant than a study of the works of these authors.

From overlooking this fact M. Taine, notwithstanding his wide and minute knowledge of England as well as of France, has represented many peculiarities of no great generality as traits which differentiate English from French thought and character. Comparative Psychology must seek its data primarily in language, general beliefs, common customs, &c.

Between the years 1865 and 1869 M. Taine was actively occupied in attempting to apply his naturalistic principles and historical theory to the elucidation of the nature and development of Art.[1]

In 1870 appeared his subtle and influential treatise, 'De l'Intelligence.' In the preface he thus points out its relation to the works to which we have just been referring: "History is applied psychology, psychology applied to more complex cases. The historian notes and traces the total transformations presented by a particular human molecule or group of human molecules; and to explain these transformations, writes the psychology of the molecule or group; Carlyle has written that of Cromwell; Sainte-Beuve that of Port Royal; Stendhal has made twenty attempts on that of the Italians; M. Renan has given us that of the Semitic race. Every perspicacious and philosophical historian labours at that of a man, an epoch, a people, or a race; the researches of linguists, mythologists, and ethnographers have no other aim; the task is invariably the description of a human mind, or of the characteristics common to a group of human minds; and what historians do with respect to the past, the great novelists and dramatists do with the present. For fifteen years I have contributed to these special and concrete psychologies; I now attempt general and abstract psychology." He concludes the treatise thus: "The reader has seen how cognitions are formed, and by what adjustments they correspond to things. They have, as materials, sensations of various kinds, some primitive and excited, others spontaneous and reviving, attached to one another, counterbalanced by one another, purposely organised by their connections and their antagonism, composed of elementary sensations smaller than themselves, these again of still

[1] 'Philosophie de l'Art,' 'Philosophie de l'Art en Italie,' 'Philosophie de l'Art dans les Pays-Bas,' &c.

smaller ones, and so on, till their differences are finally effaced and permit us to divine the existence of wholly similar infinitesimal elements whose various arrangements explain their various aspects. Thus in a cathedral, the ultimate elements are grains of sand agglutinated into stones of various forms, which, attached in pairs, form masses, whose thrusts oppose and balance each other; all these associations and all these pressures being co-ordinated in one grand harmony. Such is the simplicity of the means, and such the complication of the effect, and both the simplicity and the complication are as admirable in the mental as in the real edifice." No words could be better fitted to suggest the radical and pervading defect of the treatise. The analysis by which M. Taine reduces intelligence entirely into infinitesimal elementary sensations is precisely of the same illegitimate and illusory nature as that which would resolve a cathedral into the grains of sand of which its stones are composed. The latter analysis, in order to arrive at its ridiculous result, must leave out of account the intelligence and skill to which the simplicity and complication, the proportion and harmony, of the cathedral are directly due; the former similarly leaves out of account the presence, laws, and conditions of the mental activity which makes of sensational elements conscious states and works them up into intellectual edifices. In both forms alike, the analysis, instead of really and honestly explaining the phenomenon to which it is applied, overlooks or attempts to explain away what is absolutely essential to the existence and intelligibility of the phenomenon.

M. Taine's greatest work, 'Les Origines de la France Contemporaine,' began to appear in 1875, and four volumes have since been published. It bears no traces of that historical theory to which our attention in treating of M. Taine has of necessity been chiefly directed. It disclaims party prepossessions, and even political principles. Of the latter the author says that he has tried to find them, but as yet has discovered only one,—namely, "that human society, and especially modern society, is vast and complicated — difficult to know and to understand, but more easily known and understood by the cultivated than by the uncultivated mind, and by him who has studied it than by him who has not." The volume on the

'Ancien Régime' gave great offence to Conservatives by its trenchant and thorough criticism of the old monarchy. The three volumes on the Revolution excited the wrath of democrats by their full exhibition of those facts which Thiers overlooked, which Louis Blanc slurred over, and which Michelet refused to contemplate, but a clear recognition of which is indispensable as a protection against lying legends which have done incalculable mischief to France. The volume which treats of Napoleon displeased imperialists by its searching analysis of the character of the Emperor. Hence numerous have been the complaints of one-sidedness brought against the work, and copious the talk of critics about its lack of lofty impartiality and sobriety of judgment. A certain kind of one-sidedness in it I fully admit that there is; but I consider that it is of a kind which is here scarcely a fault. What right had the critics of M. Taine to expect from him a complete history? None. They had a right only to expect a history true so far as it goes; one in which what are stated as facts are true and important facts; and that they have got. The work of M. Taine may be, perhaps, in the strictest sense, not a history at all, but rather a study on history, a series of demonstrations of historical and psychological theses; but it will be none the less entitled to be regarded as one of the most important historical treatises produced in the present age: a treatise admirable for its fearless honesty, for its extensive original research, and for the psychological penetration and the power of delineation which it displays. Any history of the period of which it treats which would not give serious offence to political parties in France, would require to be written from a stand-point of impartiality so lofty that all clear vision from it would be impossible, and with a sobriety of judgment closely approximating to total abstention from judgment.[1]

[1] The foregoing pages on M. Taine's historical philosophy were written prior to his death. I have left them, however, unaltered, in the belief that their controversial character will not to any great extent conceal my sincere admiration of the illustrious man whose death is so vast a loss to France and to European literature. For general estimates of his character I may refer to the articles of M. Faguet in the 'Revue Bleue' of March 11, of M. Loliée in the 'Nouvelle Revue' of March 15, and (especially) of M. Gabriel Monod in the 'Contemporary Review' for April.

The following authors have theorised on history in accordance with naturalist or positivist principles :—

1. Eugène Véron.—He is a well-known publicist, who has written a number of able works, and is the chief editor of the journal 'L'Art.' His 'Progrès Intellectual dans l'humanité : Superiorité des arts modernes sur les arts anciens' (1862), is of most interest for the historical philosopher. The alternative title indicates what is its chief theme ; but a philosophical view of the history of humanity is also presented. That history is supposed to have commenced with the lowest stage of savagery ; to be divisible into two great periods—the first the period of objectivity, and the second the period of subjectivity ; and to be indefinitely or infinitely progressive. On this very slender thread M. Véron has contrived to hang a wonderful amount of ingenious, and even of true thought. In regard to Art and its history he is especially informative and suggestive. His later writings 'L'Esthétique,' 'La Mythologie dans l'Art,' 'Histoire naturelle des Religions,' and 'La Morale,' are also largely historical; and necessarily so, seeing that, like Comte, he despises introspection and psychological analysis. Of course, he has often recourse to them, although unconsciously and inconsistently.

2. Paul Mougeolle.—His 'Statique des Civilisations' is an elaborate attempt to prove that civilisation has developed from the equator towards the poles. This thesis I have already had to refer to in treating of Charles Comte. 'Les Problèmes de l'Histoire' (1886) of M. Mougeolle is a pleasant book to read, being written in a light and lively style ; contains a great many interesting ideas and facts, suggestions and criticisms ; and is comprehensively planned, and, externally at least, well arranged. It is divided into four parts. The First Part treats of "the Facts, or the matter of the Drama," and is composed of three books, which treat respectively of the facts in relation to one another, in relation to time, and in relation to space. As regards their relations to one another, he dwells on the proportionality, equivalence, and constancy of these relations. As regards their relations to time, he assails the theory of the fall or decadence, and the theory of cycles, and argues in favour of the theory of progress. And as regards their relations to space, he seeks to establish (unsuccessfully, I think,) what he calls *the law of altitudes* not *the law of latitudes*—meaning thereby that the earliest cities were built on hill-tops and that the plains were only built on comparatively late, and that civilisation has spread from the equator towards the poles. The so-called law of longitudes, which affirms that civilisation has moved from east to west, he maintains, and, in my opinion, on much stronger grounds, to be a false generalisation. The Second Part treats of "Men, or the actors of the Drama," and is divided into three books, which have for their several subjects Individuals, Societies, and Races. Kings and political leaders, founders of religion and their apostles, poets, philosophers, scientists, and inventors, are represented as having had far less influence on history than is supposed. The biographical method which has hitherto prevailed in the writing of history is strongly condemned ; and it is maintained that it must give place to the democratic method, which sees in history the work not of a few great individualities but of the innumerable multitude of individuals which have made up the successive generations of mankind. The refutation of the theory which explains history by the action of races is, perhaps, the most satisfactory portion of M. Mougeolle's work. The Third Part expounds his own theory. It treats of "the Medium, or the author of the Drama." "The medium," we are told, "makes men." The stable elements and the shifting scenes which surround humanity compose and evolve the drama of history, and even create and train the actors in it ; such is the hypothesis which alone finds favour in M. Mougeolle's eyes. The Fourth Part is on "Historians,

or the critics of the Drama." These are distributed into three schools,—the German, British, and French,—on grounds which are very worthy of consideration, although they may be, perhaps, not quite conclusive. M. Mougeolle touches on a great many of the problems of history in an exceptionally interesting way, but too lightly to reach, except rarely, sound solutions of them. The chief defects of his work, I must add, are clearly indicated in the "Preface" to it, written by M. Yves Guyot. It might be of great public advantage if authors generally were to get their works prefaced by such perfectly candid friends.

3. Louis Bourdeau.—He is the author of one very remarkable and important book, which I have had special occasion to study in another connection. I refer to his 'Théorie des Sciences' (2 vols. 1882), an elaborate attempt to improve and advance the work of Comte, in the spirit of Comte, and to expound an "integral" or universal science into which shall enter no metaphysical or theological conception. In his 'Histoire des Arts Utiles' he has made a valuable contribution to the history of industry. But his 'L'Histoire et les Historiens' (1888) is, on the whole, disappointing. M. Bourdeau considers that of true history there is as yet almost none, and that the foundations of a science of history have still to be laid. He begins his treatise by attempting to define history, with the result which I have already noticed on page 11. He then discourses on "the agents" and "the facts" of history; and strongly complains that historians have attended exclusively to celebrated personages and to striking or singular events, not seeing that, in reality, the human race is only to be known aright by studying it in its average condition, and in its general, regular, or functional facts. He devotes only six pages to "the methodical analysis" or "rational distribution" of history, and more than two hundred to an attack on "the narrative method." He would have been well advised, I think, if he had done just the reverse. Thierry, Buckle, and others have sufficiently entertained us with accounts of the blunders and defects of the older historians. And if M. Bourdeau's collection of instances of error and of prejudice on their part had been even a hundredfold more copious than it is, it would not have justified the historical scepticism into which he falls —a scepticism almost as extreme and irrational as that of Father Hardouin. Strange to say, none of his instances are drawn from the pages of modern historians imbued with the critical spirit, although it is surely manifest that before condemning the historical method hitherto exclusively employed as altogether untrustworthy and useless, it was its latest and most accredited practitioners whom he was especially bound to expose and discredit. To the narrative method he would substitute a mathematical or numerical method, the statistical method. It is only by this method—by measurement, enumeration, and calculation—that, in his opinion, true history can be obtained, and a positive science of history established. He eulogises the method, and explains how he would apply it, but he shows no perception of the proper limits of its applicability. He does not seem to have studied its history, logic, or relationships; to know anything of the researches and discussions of a Guerry, Dufau, Guillard, Legoyt, or Leplay, of an Engel, Wappäus, Wagner, Drobisch, von Oettingen, &c. He treats, in conclusion, of the laws of history: first, of its special laws, which are either laws of order or of relation; next, of its general law, the law of progress; and then, of the demonstration of the laws. The law of progress he represents as a necessary law, and as of a mathematical nature like other laws; the theory of progress as still an hypothesis, like Newton's theory of attraction; and the formula of progress as one analogous to that of gravitation.

CHAPTER XI.

HISTORICAL PHILOSOPHY OF THE CRITICAL SCHOOL.

I.

POSITIVE philosophy, in the acceptation of the positivists, is a legitimate stage or form of philosophy. All the various special sciences aim merely at the extension of knowledge of a particular kind, at the acquisition of truth in regard to certain specific objects. Each of them is confined within a sphere of its own, and has its own class of specialists. And yet not one of them is entirely independent and self-sufficient. They have all a community of nature, and are in various ways related. There are precedence and subordination, order and harmony, among them, so that many and diverse as they are they imply a whole not less than do the objects of which they severally treat, a system in which each of them should find its appropriate place. But this whole or system when discovered by a scientific investigation of the limits, methods, affinities, and inter-relations of the sciences, will be itself a science equally with the sciences which it presupposes, and of which it is the theory or doctrine. It will be of the same nature as they are, and differ from them only as general from special science, or as an organism from its members. There is manifestly not only room but need for such a science, even if it be nothing more than such a doctrine of the sciences as affords a synthesis and organisation of them. And such a science or doctrine is what the positivists call positive philosophy. Their philosophy is a science of the sciences which is a necessary complement of special science, and yet of the same nature, at least in their view. It assumes the special sciences, and builds itself up on what these sciences teach.

Now this is well so far as it goes, but it does not go far enough. It is unsatisfactory, not because it is false, but inasmuch as it is superficial and inadequate. Positive philosophy, understood as indicated, in basing itself on the special sciences assumes their assumptions. It assumes that we know what knowledge and science, certainty and probability, are; that truth of various kinds is within the reach of the human mind; that it is to be sought by certain methods; and that there are fundamental ideas and fixed laws of thought on which we can rely in our investigations. All the special sciences make these assumptions, and must, if they are unsound, fall to the ground, and bring down the positive philosophy of which these sciences are at once the sole supports and the sole objects. Neither such science nor such philosophy is thorough, or capable of satisfying a completely rational being. A fully awakened mind is one awakened from the dogmatic slumber which accepts assumptions without examination: assumptions which may be denied not less than affirmed, and of which the affirmation and the denial alike require justification. "Scientific thought," to use here words which I have elsewhere employed, "is not necessarily self-criticising thought; on the contrary, mere scientific thought, however rigid and methodical, is essentially dogmatic thought. It is not dogmatism, but it is dogma. It is reasoned, yet unreflective. It builds up what is admitted to be knowledge, but it does not inquire what so-called knowledge is or is essentially worth. Positive philosophy is such thought at its highest perfection, or in its purest and most comprehensive form, but it has all the essential defects of such thought. It is merely an advance on special science, as special science itself is on ordinary knowledge, and ordinary knowledge on crude sensation. Along the whole line the mind never changes its attitude towards its objects; at the end this is just what it was at the beginning. The scientist often fancies that he is a man who takes nothing on trust; in reality, he takes everything on trust, because he accepts without question or reservation thought itself as naturally truthful and its laws as valid. Whatever a multitude of superficial scientists may suppose to the contrary, the fact is that the entire procedure of science, and of philosophy in so far as it is simply a generalisation of science, is assumptive

and dogmatic. At bottom, science, which is so often contrasted with and opposed to faith, is mere faith, implicit faith, and in the view of a serious and consistent scepticism must be blind faith. Thought may assume, however, and is bound to assume, a very different attitude towards itself and towards its objects. It may pass, and ought to pass, from a believing to an inquiring, from a dogmatic to a critical stage. It may turn, and ought to turn, its attention and force from a study of the relations of the known to an examination of the conditions and guarantees of knowledge."[1]

The need for a critical philosophy was made apparent by the destructive work of Hume. Reid and his followers saw what was wanted, but only imperfectly supplied it. Kant gave the first general yet profound exposition of philosophy as a criticism of knowledge. The French critical school consists of thinkers who have deeply felt the influence of Kant, and who for the most part accept his principles even when they reject his conclusions. In the view of its representatives the inquiry neglected by the positivists, the inquiry into the conditions of experience and the assumptions of the sciences, is of primary importance. They recognise the absurdity of a man excluding metaphysics and theology from the sphere of knowledge, and including physics and sociology within it, although he has never taken the trouble to ask what knowledge is, whether it is attainable at all or not, and if attainable what its criteria and limits are. And, as a consequence of thus differing from the positivists, they aim likewise at being more severely scientific; are much more exacting and difficult to satisfy in regard to proof; and have a keener sense of the uncertainty latent in general theories and complex inquiries, and less respect for the mere name of science and for much of what passes as science. They are not so positive as the positivists in the sense of being prone to make either decided affirmations or negations. They are well aware that for such intellects as the human the domain of probability is far more extensive than that of certainty, and are perhaps even apt to suppose that rational certainties are fewer than they are. The positivist is a dogmatist even when he calls himself an agnostic. The

[1] Presbyterian Review, July 1885, p. 2.

criticist is not as such a sceptic, but he is more likely to fall into scepticism than into dogmatism. The criticist often holds phenomenalism and relativism as narrowly and exclusively as the positivist, but he has always more reason for holding them, and a clearer conception of what he means by them.

The criticist mode of thought has found in France its two most typical representatives in the late M. Cournot and M. Renouvier. Both have occupied themselves with historical philosophy. They have written in entire independence of each other. While both may be regarded as in a general way disciples of Kant, neither has sacrificed to Kant, or any other thinker, his own rights of private judgment.

M. Augustin Cournot (1801-77) had a remarkable capacity both for speculative thought and scientific research. He filled difficult and important educational positions. He wrote valued works on the higher branches of mathematics. The treatises in which he attempted to apply mathematics to economics have been allowed by competent judges to be among the most ingenious and successful of their kind. He expounded his philosophical opinions in the 'Essai sur les fondements de nos connaissances,' 2 vols., 1851; the 'Traité de l'enchaînement des idées fondamentales dans les sciences et dans l'histoire,' 2 vols., 1861; and 'Considérations sur la marche des idées et des événements dans les temps modernes,' 2 vols., 1872. These are all most instructive and suggestive books, such as could only be produced by a mind of rare intellectual sincerity, thoroughly disciplined in exact science and in the practice of analysis, and with a grasp of facts at once capacious and firm: books not written with a view to being easily read, and to please, impress, or astonish; not written for a vulgar and thoughtless public, but for the only public worthy of them, one which earnestly seeks truth precisely as it is, truth in its purity, naked, unexaggerated, and unadorned. The last mentioned of them is of most interest for the philosophical historian.

Cournot's conception of philosophy is peculiar. He does not admit it to be a science, inasmuch as he holds it neither to have a definite object nor to be capable of furnishing demonstrative proof or certainty. To represent it as being, or capable

of being, science can only tend, in his opinion, to spread and confirm the pernicious impression that it is nothing real at all, but merely a pretentious illusion. It has no particular object, for whatever objects there may be they are the proper subjects of particular sciences, mathematical, physical, biological, noölogical, or political. Nor does it deal, as Comte taught, with the whole of the generalities of the sciences, the sum of certainties established by the sciences: these generalities and certainties must always belong to the sciences which prove them. Philosophy is an indispensable element of all the sciences, a spirit which inspires and vivifies them. Its conclusions are not certainties. Every philosophy, so far as it embodies itself in doctrines, is only a whole of more or less probable views relative to the order and the reason of things. Cournot's conception of philosophy is thus entirely different from Auguste Comte's. The latter would have all problems which do not admit of a positive solution wiped out; all questions which cannot be definitely settled by experience and scientific proof denied the right of being put. He was by nature and on system intolerant of doubts, questionings, hesitations of belief. Cournot shows himself profoundly conscious that a finite intellect must be a fallible intellect; that man as a conditional being cannot have a strictly absolute certainty; that it is not merely human to err, but that the possibility of error is so involved in the very constitution of the human mind that it cannot be thought of as absent from it; that in all perception, all consciousness, all reasoning, there lurks, and must ever lurk, this possibility; and that we must often resign ourselves to be guided, even in matters of high concern, by low probabilities. In his view all that we can say of the most completely verified laws of nature is that they are infinitely probable; and "speaking physically, infinite probability is equivalent to reality, but logically speaking it is never more than a probability." It is just those questions which most interest and concern humanity which are generally least susceptible of scientific treatment; and therefore it is no disparagement to philosophy to represent it as occupied with such questions.[1]

[1] There is a good study on the general philosophy of Cournot by T. V. Charpentier, in the 'Rev. Phil.,' t. xi.

Cournot's philosophy of history is merely an historical etiology, an analysis and discussion of the causes and concatenations of causes which have concurred to bring about the events of which history presents us with the picture. It is not simply the history either of civilisation or of humanity, for universal history has its etiology just as have the histories of religion, science, morality, policy, art, and industry, or, in other words, the special historical developments which it includes. Nor is it the ambitious and hypothetical teleology of history, to which the name of philosophy of history has been so often given. M. Cournot does not contest that the course of humanity proceeds according to a fixed plan and towards a decreed or designed end; but he thinks that all attempts to trace such a plan and determine such an end are plainly defective and unreliable, and that the most celebrated of them, like those of Hegel and Cousin, although they might be received with applause around a professorial chair, are worthless before criticism, the only good kind of philosophy. He abjures for his own part such venturesomeness. His historical philosophy is critical, not speculative. It allows the use of hypotheses only in so far as they suggest, or are suggested by, inductions.

Cournot rejects the Comtian law of the three states, and, succinctly but conclusively, shows its inconsistency with facts. He does not attempt to replace it by another; he does not even venture to affirm that there is any law of history. Defining a law of nature to be "a constant mathematical relation between two variable quantities," he finds nowhere in history laws corresponding to his definition. It is not laws, therefore, which he seeks in history, but causes or reasons, connections and relations. "Whether there are or are not laws in history, it is enough that there are facts, and that these facts are sometimes subordinate to one another, sometimes independent of one another, in order that there may be room for a criticism designed to trace out in the one case the subordination and in the other the independence. And as this criticism cannot pretend to irresistible demonstrations, such as produces scientific certainty, but is restricted to the setting forth of analogies and inductions, like those with which philosophy must be content (otherwise it would be a science, as so many people have vainly

pretended it to be, and not philosophy), it follows that we are quite entitled to give this criticism of which we are speaking, and which, notwithstanding its uncertainties, is of so much interest, the name of 'philosophy of history.' The same holds of the history of peoples as of the history of nature, which is not to be confounded with the science of nature, seeing that the one has chiefly for object *facts* and the other *laws*, but facts which may be on so great a scale, and have consequences so vast and durable, that they appear to us to have, and really have, the same importance as laws. None the less reason recognises a radical difference between laws and facts: the former valid always and everywhere, by a necessity inherent in the permanent essence of things; the latter brought about by a concurrence of anterior facts, and determining in their turn the facts which are to follow them."[1]

Cournot considers it essential to a correct understanding of history to distinguish between necessary and fortuitous events, and to assign a considerable place to the latter. He holds that the idea of chance or hazard is not a mere phantom evoked by the mind to hide from itself its own ignorance, or to express the imperfection of its knowledge in certain circumstances and conditions, but the notion of a fact true in itself, demonstrable in some cases by reasoning, and more commonly confirmed by observation. The fact which it implies is the independence of series of causes which, although unrelated, do in fact concur to produce certain phenomena or events, which are on this account appropriately termed fortuitous. Such independence of series of causes Cournot regards as quite consistent with belief in their common suspension to a single primordial ring beyond, or even within the limits to which our reasonings or observations can attain. There is, in his view, no opposition between chance properly understood and Providence, between hazard and Divine Will or Fate. An accidental fact does not mean an effect without a cause, or a fact which human wisdom cannot in any measure foresee or provide against, but a fact brought about by the interaction of chains or groups of facts which are not naturally connected. Were there no facts of this kind there could be no history, but only science. Were all facts of this

[1] Page 4 of Preface.

kind there could equally be no history, but only annals. History properly so called implies the commingling of fortuitous and necessary facts. The part of fortuity, according to Cournot, is especially large in political history, as the action of exceptional and superior personalities has there most effect; it diminishes, however, as general causes, the collective reason and will, attain ascendancy. Inasmuch as the efficiency of fortuitous events may be extensive and even permanent, particularly in the political sphere, the student of historical etiology must be on his guard against overlooking them; at the same time, political history, in which hazard has most influence, is for the historical etiologist not the first but the last department of history, the most superficial, particular, and external. On this very account, however, political history is always the chief object of interest to the ordinary historian, constitutionally incapable of general and philosophical views.

With characteristic caution M. Cournot refrains from attempting to survey the course of history as a whole, and confines his reflections chiefly to modern times. He has, however, some introductory chapters on the medieval period; and in these he characterises with remarkable sagacity its general spirit, its scientific condition, its scholastic philosophy, its ecclesiastical organisation, and its feudal constitution. He shows very clearly how it ought to be differentiated from ancient and modern history. It is to be regretted that the late Professor Freeman did not become acquainted with his observations on the division of history into "ancient" and "modern." He could hardly have failed to learn from them that there was more to be done in relation to that division than simply to assail it and condemn its abuses; that it was also necessary to inquire how far it is legitimate, and what the terms ancient and modern, old and new, when applied to history and historical phenomena, really mean.

Even of the limited period of history selected by him for investigation, Cournot does not attempt to give a systematic survey, to trace in it the operation of laws, or to formulate its characteristics and results. His treatment of it is comprehensive, but not deductive or constructive; it has no other unity than that which arises from sameness of spirit and method. His

conclusions are the results of careful analysis and reflection, but they do not pretend to be more than "considerations," probabilities, generalities. To detach them from the discussions to which they belong, and to force them into more definite and rigid forms than the author himself has given them, would be to falsify his thought. Cournot's disquisitions hardly even admit of useful abridgment, as there is no diffuseness of language in them to prune away, and the probabilist traits of the reasoning in them require for their exhibition almost exact reproduction.

Each century of modern European history—the sixteenth, seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth—has assigned to it a separate book; and in each book the general plan followed is the same. What that plan is will be best stated in the author's own words: "If we were treating of some ancient or remote civilisation, it would be proper to present first the ethnographical data which are chiefly supplied by the study of languages; then we should occupy ourselves with geographical data, with the conditions of climate and of soil; and, the medium or theatre of the civilisation having been thus defined, we should successively pass in review the different elements of this civilisation, the religion, morals, customs, political institutions, poetry, philosophy, art, industry, sciences, in the order of their antiquity and originality, as nature regulates it, when there are no abnormal causes of a hasty or a tardy development, or even of a complete atrophy. But for our purpose, whether we take account of peculiarities of origin or have regard to its final term, a nearly inverse order is to be followed. We must give the first place in our plan to what truly constitutes the common substratum of European civilisation; that which has been the least altered or repressed in its progress by elements of a more variable nature; that which will have for future generations the most persistent interest. We shall therefore give the positive sciences priority to philosophical systems, and even philosophical systems—notwithstanding their following one another so rapidly, although in a circle determined by the immutable constitution of the human mind—priority to religious doctrines, which, humanly considered, depend much more on historical conjunctures, a circumstance which does not hinder them from exerting an influence far more

penetrating, general, and enduring. And we shall assign the last place in our plan to all that directly tells of the diversities of origin, genius, and customs, among the nations which participate in our European civilisation; concluding with views on the great historical events in which accidents have certainly more effect than elsewhere, although not so much as to compel us to despair of recognising in them any traces of order and regular concatenation."[1]

As any book of the treatise under consideration will, accordingly, serve as well as any other to exemplify Cournot's general method of procedure, let us select for the purpose the fifth, which treats of our own century.

"The exact sciences in the nineteenth century" are the subjects of its first chapter. These sciences — mathematics, physics, chemistry, &c. — have, we are told, so extended and ramified, so developed and subdivided, that the possibility of writing a history of them has almost vanished. It is only possible to record their achievements from day to day in a multitude of journals and in their own technical language. Their historical interest has decreased with the general diminution of their intelligibility. Mathematics has been relatively losing its supremacy. Its progress has not been so closely and entirely connected with the advances of the physical sciences in the present as in the two previous centuries. It has been becoming not less but more apparent that the key to the knowledge of all physical nature will not be found in mathematics themselves, or even in mathematics conjoined with mechanics. Physicists are learning that they must trust less to mathematics and more to their own combined efforts; mathematicians are realising that they must occupy themselves more exclusively with perfecting their science for its own sake. Physics has been growing more experimental, and mathematics more speculative. Astronomy from being almost entirely mathematical has largely developed into a natural science, thereby gaining greatly in cosmological interest.

Passing over what is said of the condition and historical bearings of optics, thermology, and chemistry, we come to the second chapter, which is on "the progress of the natural sciences in

[1] 'Considérations,' t. i. pp. 34, 35.

the nineteenth century." The chief question discussed in it is whether or not the development of these sciences has tended to show that organic nature admits of a merely mechanical explanation. Cournot contends that it has not; that it has even confirmed the distinction between the organic and inorganic, and made apparent that "vitalism is the true renovating principle of philosophy in the nineteenth century." Matter, Life, and Reason are, in his view, three distinct stages of reality; the higher of which, while implying, are inexplicable by the lower. Indicating the significance of the advances in the knowledge of nature represented by the origination of such new disciplines as embryology, teratology, and botanical and zoological geography, he describes these advances as, strictly and distinctively speaking, more historical than scientific. He holds that there will always be a natural history, as well as a human history, incapable of being raised to the rank of science, yet none the less important on that account. In every form history has more affinity than exact science with the genius of democracy.

The question of the origin of species and the Darwinian hypothesis come under consideration in the next chapter. The question is shown to be of the widest and most far-reaching significance. Darwin's hypothesis is argued to be very partial and defective, yet to have the great value of indicating or suggesting ways in which the problem should be attacked.

The following chapter is a discourse on "the historical labours of the nineteenth century." Prominence is given to the fact that the history of man and of society has been in the present age attached more closely to that of nature; and anthropology, ethnology, and linguistics are referred to in confirmation of it. Cournot agrees with Max Müller in regarding the Science of Language as a *natural science;* and only regrets that he has made too much concession to "the cavilling logicians of the country in which he writes," by admitting that what is said of the *life* of languages is merely to be understood *metaphorically.* According to Cournot's own view, the use of the term *life* in linguistics is not properly metaphorical, or more metaphorical than the terms *force, attraction,* or *affinity* in physics. Surveying the jurisprudence, politics, and economics of the historical school, the historical criticism of art and religion characteristic

of our age, and the prevalence of the naturalistic or historical spirit in almost all spheres, he comes to the conclusion that the nineteenth century may be justly affirmed to have been, on the whole, a century of historical reaction and renovation.

The philosophy of the nineteenth century is brought up for review in the next chapter. This philosophy is also represented as having been, in the main, a reaction and a renovation. The judgment which our author pronounces on Eclecticism is more severe than that which he passes on Positivism, but he points out with clearness and effect the errors even of the latter, and comes to the conclusion that it has no claim to be called *positive* in the sense of *scientific.*

The sixth chapter treats of "the economic revolution in the nineteenth century." That revolution is argued to have been due to the natural and concurrent developments of mechanics, chemistry, and geology, and to have owed nothing to the great catastrophes which happened in France at the close of the previous century, or to any other political changes. Some of its moral and political effects are indicated. It has largely contributed to make the pursuit of wealth the principal aim of men, and to raise industry above all other interests. It has in various ways exerted a socially levelling influence, and has favoured the growth of democracy. On intellect and morality it has worked in some respects for evil, in others for good.

The economic revolution of the age has produced the Socialism of the age. Hence the next chapter treats of "Socialism." In contemporary Europe there are, according to Cournot, three, and only three, great parties face to face: one which would revive the old religious faith, and on that basis build up and maintain the social system; another which puts its trust in democratic institutions, more State control, enlarged municipal powers, and the like; and a third which abhors the Church, and sets slight value on individual rights or popular liberties, but deems it intolerable that a few should be wealthy while many are poor, and urges as a remedy for this evil the appropriation by the community of the means of production and of exchange, for the common benefit. The conflict between Liberalism and Socialism he describes as

one of the conspicuous characteristics of the nineteenth century. Socialism is the younger force, and its advent and development are peculiarly worthy of study. Its progress has been remarkable, and there are obvious reasons why it should have been so; but the socialistic ideal is only capable of partial realisation. It is impossible to eliminate economic competition; manifestly impossible, for example, to get rid of it between nations, and if impossible to get rid of it *between them*, necessarily also impossible to get rid of it *within them*. The protection which Socialism offers is a symptom of relative feebleness. Those who are desirous of it must be wanting in that individual energy which is after all the source of national energy; and it is not likely that they will exercise the chief influence on the future of civilisation. The principles of economic liberty are, indeed, much less scientifically established theorems than postulates necessary to the establishment of economic science. Such postulates, however, they are; and Socialism, which denies them, has not, and cannot have, any economic science properly so called.

In the eighth chapter the movement of opinion during the present century in relation to public law and political institutions is the subject under consideration. It is maintained that in this sphere also it is necessary to distinguish between the effects of general causes and those of a particular cause however powerful,—between the consequences of the spirit of the age and of a revolutionary accident. In confirmation it is argued that the removal of political inequalities and religious disabilities, the extinction of slavery, &c., far from having been directly and mainly due to the French Revolution, have been chiefly accomplished by those who have been least in sympathy with that Revolution. The present age is held to be even more democratic and more levelling in its tendencies than the preceding, but to be so owing to internal, intellectual, and economic transformations of society brought about by causes independent of the Revolution. Various changes in law and government are traced to a general change which has taken place in thought and feeling towards humanity. Humanity has become, to a large extent, the object of a sort of religious worship, based, however, not on the Christian idea of an incarnation of

God in humanity, but on faith in a self-perfecting development of humanity which will end in a realisation of its immanent divine ideal. The present age, as compared with that which preceded it, is, further, described as being somewhat indifferent to liberty, and more ready to submit to encroachments on it which promise to be generally advantageous. This is traced in part to weakened spiritual faith and to loss of enthusiasm, but chiefly to the confidence which the people have acquired that their liberty can no longer be seriously endangered. Of the last chapter I shall merely say that it treats of "the European political system in the nineteenth century, and the advent of the principle of nationalities;" and that its conclusions are of a kind which there would be little or no advantage in merely stating.

It would be foolish to recommend the work of Cournot to general readers of any type or class. He probably never wrote a paragraph for such readers, and certainly none of them would ever care to read any book of his. I strongly recommend the work, however, to the attention of thoughtful students of history. They will find that every page bears the impress of patient, independent, and sagacious thought. I believe I have not met with a more genuine thinker in the course of my investigations into the development of historical speculation. My admiration of his merits as a thinker, I must add, does not arise from any very close accordance between my own opinions and his. I decidedly reject his view of philosophy. In my opinion philosophy has definite objects, may attain certainties, and is as properly of the nature of science as are the special sciences. His probabilism, like all other probabilist systems, seems to me an inconsistent scepticism. I do not think that his doctrine of the accidental in history has either the degree of truth or the measure of importance which he attaches to it. The contingency which pervades and characterises history ought, in my judgment, to be traced mainly to human freedom, not to such accidents as he emphasises, which are simply necessities that men cannot foresee or avert. The chief defect of Cournot's treatment of history is an insufficient appreciation of the power and efficiency of conscience and moral freedom in history. The answers which he gives to the particular

questions he discusses are naturally often disputable. But he was nevertheless a man of the finest intellectual qualities, of a powerful and absolutely truthful mind; and his writings will richly repay careful study.

II.

The chief of French criticists is M. Charles Renouvier. Like Auguste Comte, he was born at Montpellier, and educated at the *École Polytechnique* of Paris, where he was distinguished by his proficiency in mathematics. He has, however, far greater power of abstract thought and of logical and psychological analysis than Comte possessed, as well as a far wider and more thorough general culture. He has also, what Comte had not, a healthy and harmonious mental constitution. Having an independent fortune he has never worked for bread or gain; but he has been a most indefatigable worker in the cause of truth. He has been a voluminous publicist. In theorising he has never lost sight of ethical and practical aims. His philosophical conception of the universe is a pre-eminently moral conception of it. Liberty is, in his view, the essence of man, and the ground of certitude; and the moral law is the one fixed point beyond phenomena, the first of all truths, and the warrant for all such belief in God, the soul, and immortality, as men need in order that they may live a life of duty. The treatises in which he has expounded his philosophy present to us a wide territory; but, as Dr Shadworth H. Hodgson has said, "the crowning peak of the whole land, the glorious sunlit summit to which its roads have led him, and from which we obtain no uncertain glimpses of the promised future of humanity, is the 'Science de la Morale.'"[1]

M. Renouvier has sought to be more Kantian than Kant; to correct and complete the thought of Kant; to rethink and revise his criticism and its results, and to develop and apply what is true in them. He claims to have freed the doctrine

[1] M. Renouvier's philosophy was almost unknown in England until Dr Hodgson called attention to it by his articles in 'Mind' (vol. iv.) My own acquaintance with it, however, began much earlier. There are two excellent articles on "M. Renouvier et le Criticisme Française" by M. Beurier, in the 'Rev. Phil.,' t. iii.

of which Kant established the principles from the contradictions and errors into which Kant fell, and to have given it by a new analysis of the laws of thought and means of knowledge what it previously lacked, a truly positive character and a complete and harmonious systematic unity. He resolutely rejects "noumena," "things-in-themselves," "substances," "the absolute," &c., under all forms and disguises. He has reasoned out with a comprehensiveness and consistency probably unequalled a doctrine of phenomenism, distinct from empiricism and positivism in almost all respects except one,—the reduction of knowledge to the laws of phenomenism. Of this doctrine he has given a full and systematic exposition in the works indicated below.[1]

The fourth of M. Renouvier's "Essais de la Critique Générale" is entitled 'Introduction à la Philosophie Analytique de l'histoire.' It was published in 1864. A second edition of it may be expected soon to appear; and it will doubtless, like the second editions of the other "Essais," largely alter and add to the earlier edition. In its present form the work must be regarded as a very imperfect expression of its author's views on the subjects discussed in it. All these subjects, and many of a kindred nature, have been often dealt with by him since in the pages of the 'Critique Philosophique,' or elsewhere. The 'Critique Philosophique,' which appeared fortnightly from 1872 to 1889 inclusive, was, for the most part, the joint production of M. Renouvier and his friend M. Pillon. It is a remarkable monument of their energy and talent, and an abundant source of information as to the New Criticism, and its founder's views on philosophy, politics, and history.[2]

M. Renouvier indicates in the opening sentences of his

[1] 'Essais de Critique Générale,' 4 vols., 1854-64. Of this work there has appeared a second edition of the 'Logique,' 3 tom., 1875; of the 'Psychologie,' 3 tom., 1875; and of the 'Principes de la Nature,' 2 tom., 1891. 'La Science de la Morale,' 2 vols., was published in 1869; and the 'Esquisse d'une Classification Systématique des Doctrines Philosophiques,' 2 vols., in 1886.

[2] It has been succeeded by the 'Année Philosophique,' which, under the editorship of M. Pillon, has appeared since 1890. From 1879 to 1883 MM. Renouvier and Pillon edited 'La Critique Réligieuse,' which contains many very remarkable dissertations on religious questions, both of a theoretical and practical character.

Fourth Essay — the 'Introduction to the Analytical Philosophy of History'—its general aim. "History," he says, "is the experience which humanity has of itself. Approached without criticism, history can only multiply and magnify those incoherent phenomena which exclusively individual experience yields when the moral law does not rule the conduct and the judgment. Treated according to an *a priori* system, it disfigures or despises the facts; it rejects some or inserts others, in order to arrange them with more ease into series. The necessity of a so-called organic development is thus substituted for the simple and strong light of consciousness, which, for the universal as for the particular, is incomparably the best means of judging the data of experience, of assigning them their true place, and even of supplying at need the want of them. But history studied without a foregone conclusion, without a cosmical, or theological, or physiological hypothesis, without a plan drawn up in ignorance and prejudice beforehand, history supported entirely on an impartial registration, and guided by the simple laws of judgment and of morality, must enlarge the range of personal experience, respecting the knowledge of humanity, by all the distance which separates general facts from individual phenomena." By these words we are told that, in the opinion of their author, reliable and useful views of history are only to be obtained by a careful analysis of the contents of history,—one uninfluenced by any *a priori* principles or hypotheses, but which conforms to the laws of inference and does not contradict primary moral perceptions.

Questions and hypotheses relating to the physical or physiological origin of man are not discussed in the Fourth but in the Third Essay—'The Principles of Nature'—the most appropriate place, as they refer rather to the general kingdom of nature than to the special province of human history. They are discussed by M. Renouvier with entire independence, and rare profundity and penetration. He has studied most carefully evolutionism in its various forms, and especially in its chief English exponents. In treating of such themes as ontogenic, embryogenic, and palæontological progress, physical evil, species, transformism, the struggle for existence, the descent of man, his primitive unity or plurality, the conditions and mode of

his advent on earth, he steadily regards them in a critical spirit, or, in other words, from the point of view of the logician, not of the fanciful deviser of hypotheses, or of either the affirmative or negative dogmatist. He would, of course, be untrue to his own principles if he failed to show himself fully aware that all conclusions on these obscure and complicated topics must be of a dubious character, and stand in need of continuous revision. This charge, however, cannot be brought against him. He may have been at times too severe a critic of others, but he has certainly been also a strict critic of himself, and shown himself ready to modify his opinions into accordance with the evidence.

The reader of the Fourth Essay must also bear in mind that it implies the Second—the 'Psychology.' It rests upon the doctrine of human nature which is there carefully expounded. It may seem to assume without proof, or to adopt without adequate confirmation, disputable and peculiar views as to human sensibility, intelligence, passion, volition, liberty, and their relations; but these views, it must be remembered, have been argued at length in the earlier and more fundamental treatise. It is in this treatise also that the theory of historical certitude, as included in the general theory of certitude, one which M. Renouvier has discussed very earnestly and ingeniously, is expounded; and that the probabilities concerning the moral order of the world, the grounds of faith in immortality and in God, which are of essential moment and intensest interest to the historical philosopher, are set forth.

The Fourth Essay begins with an inquiry into "moral origins," or, in other words, into the principles of the rise and development of good and evil in humanity. M. Renouvier fully recognises the difficulty of the inquiry. The question of pure origins is one always of inscrutable obscurity. The question even of such relative origins as those which he has here in view refers to a period concerning which there are no records or testimonies. It is, therefore, peculiarly necessary in discussing it to maintain a critical attitude towards all attempts to deal with it in an easy, dogmatic, hypothetical, *quasi*-scientific manner. Yet of a directly and strictly scientific solution it does not seem to admit. The only available method

of grappling with it, M. Renouvier thinks, is by the aid of inductions drawn from the nature of man as that is known to us in our own experience, but reduced to its essential, general, and simplest elements, those elements which there is every reason to believe are invariable.

He has always seen with exceptional clearness the inherent unreasonableness, so prevalent among scientists, of assimilating primitive man to a modern savage, and arguing directly from the latter to the former. Primitive man may have been superior to savage man, while yet destitute of advantages which the savage possesses. The primitive man, just because primitive, although endowed with a good intellect, heart, and will, could have no traditions, acquisitions, or habits, no words except those which he invented, no tools or rudiments of art not of his own devising, no beliefs not attained by personal exertion. As regards language, implements, arts, and amount of experience, even the lowest savages may reasonably be held to have been superior to primitive man, and yet their manhood may as reasonably be supposed to be inferior owing to their intellectual perversion and moral corruption. The modern savage is to a very large extent a creature of traditions and habits; and to that extent he is not primitive. You must strip your savage of all that he has inherited or acquired before you can get at anything primitive in him. But this means that you must take from him all the corrupt tendencies he has inherited, all the evil habits which he has formed, all the beliefs in which he has grown up, the language which he has learned, tribal customs and usages, &c. But when you have done all this, where is your savage? He is clean gone as a savage. There remains nothing of him but those rudiments of humanity which are common to him and to yourself. And these you must obviously study in yourself, seeing that it is only of yourself that you have direct knowledge, immediate experience. But the knowledge and experience of yourself must be so analysed and generalised, that what is individual and peculiar, secondary and factitious in it, may be eliminated. The primitive man must be conceived of as a true and whole man, yet only as an abstract or generic man, without racial or individual determinations. And the history to be elucidated

must be of a corresponding character. "This history, with which I am about to deal, is that which considers human determinations of the most general kind, and which holds collective ideas and beliefs to be the most important of all, inasmuch as they are the common coefficients of any individual whatsoever. But these great intellectual facts must not be separated from the passions and from morality: from the passions which are the stimulants and very matter of life; or from morality, of which the form modified by contact with various external and internal phenomena, acts on beliefs and ideas, and then experiences their reactions."

M. Renouvier attributes to the first men the primary capacities of sensitivity and the simple emotive tendencies of human nature, and also reason and freewill, but the latter only in the state of potentialities, or powers as yet unformed by exercise and experience. Without these they would not be men. To come forth from the instinctive condition which is characteristic of the animal, they must have been endowed with reason in, so to speak, an instinctive state, and with liberty as a power of representing their determinations as possible. The passage from potentiality to actuality is the fundamental fact of the history of primitive man; and the chief traits of it may be ascertained, with a fair measure of probability, through introspective analysis and induction. In order to exhibit the more clearly his views on this point, and as to the general moral condition of primitive man, Renouvier introduces them by an examination of those propounded by Kant in his 'Conjectural Commencement of the History of Mankind,' and in his 'Criticism of Religion within the Limits of Mere Reason.' It is a searching investigation, and, on the whole, a most successful attempt to distinguish between the true and the false elements in Kant's theory of the moral origins of humanity: a theory, according to Renouvier, far more profound and instructive than that of any other philosopher on the same subject, yet hopelessly inconsistent, and burdened with serious errors, owing to Kant having had a narrow conception of liberty, failed to recognise the law of moral solidarity, and dealt with his problem in a way contrary to critical principles.

Renouvier proceeds otherwise than Kant. He begins with

complete moral persons—*i.e.*, complete in the elements of manhood, or, as having in indissoluble conjunction passions and affections, conceptions, and will. He posits no original antagonism between the law and the affections, or serious contrariety among the affections themselves. He does not assume that the law is ever unrelated to, or unconnected with, some affection; or that it is realised in the consciousness of primitive men in its distinctness and generality, or otherwise than as vaguely and obscurely blended with particular feelings and passions, and as associated with particular acts; or that it is felt to have been promulgated by any power external to humanity, or to have penal sanctions attached to it. He is content to suppose the reverse of all this to have been characteristic of the primitive state, although a state thus simple and indeterminate could hardly, he thinks, have been of long duration.

Thus conceiving of primitive man he does not find it necessary to think of him as either originally good or originally evil, but only as innocent and peccable. It is by the exercise of his liberty that man becomes either truly good or truly evil. "The conflict of the passions arises inevitably from the plurality of the ends which man from the very constitution of his nature sets before him. Evil never tempts him as evil; but a good which he pursues is often unattainable without detriment to another good, so that each of these goods appears an evil with reference to the other. Conscience is therefore bound to choose between them by its self-determining activity. The commonest form of the opposition occurs in relation to time, when two goods, both really good relatively to the agent yet incompatible, concern different periods and imply more or less of duration or of generality; or in relation to persons, when the good of the agent excludes that of the beings connected with him, and particularly of his fellows and kindred, those with whom he recognises himself to be in communion. The first of these cases is of prime importance for the development of each man and of his worth as a man. It is there that the virtues and vices which specially concern the agent himself have their origin. For example, experience has soon taught him that the eager and obstinate pursuit of a certain end, without any consideration of what may result from it or what it may lead to,

brings dangers and evils, that is to say, excludes other goods either essential to him, or which will be of great consequence to him in the course of his life. According as he will learn by an effort of reflection and of will to measure his acts and to moderate his present affections, or will abandon himself without reserve to the passions which animate him, he will train himself to prudence or contract the vices which follow the habit of yielding without reflection to the precipitate movements of the soul."[1] As with prudence so with temperance, fortitude, benevolence, justice, and their opposites,—with all the virtues and all the vices. They are all the products of liberty in given historical conditions. By accumulated acts habits are formed, and with the habits the virtue or vice. The *fall* of primitive man is thus, according to Renouvier, intelligible; but it is not to be understood as a *fall* from the height of a developed morality or from the virtue acquired by anterior efforts. Analysis of the data of moral experience shows, he thinks, that it must mean that man instead of reflectively and voluntarily accomplishing a *possible ascent* in good from innocence to virtue, everywhere worked out a *real descent* from innocence to vice.

My limits do not allow me to indicate how he describes the processes originative of the virtues and vices, or how he characterises the phases of the development of moral qualities. Suffice it to say that the method which he follows is critical, psychological, historical; that it shuns all metaphysical assumptions, all speculations unverifiable by experience; that it treats the growth of morality as throughout an historical movement, and, indeed, as comprehensive and regulative of the general movement of history. The whole history of man is viewed by Renouvier as the product of the use or abuse of freedom; the outcome of the moral agency of man. The principles of morality he represents as necessary to the very existence of, and pervasive of the entire evolution of, society, and everywhere present and operative in history as law is present and operative in its applications. No one else has brought the Science of Morality and the Philosophy of History into such close conjunction. For him the former is the central and ruling science, and the latter one of its dependencies. Hence his great work

[1] Quatrième Essai, p. 56.

—perhaps his greatest—'La Science de la Morale,' is at almost all points in contact with, and the complement of, the work now under our consideration.

I regret that I must not attempt even to summarise M. Renouvier's admirable observations on the law of solidarity in good and evil, the formation of *ethic races*, and the principles of the perversions of justice, although they are novel and of much interest for an understanding of history. After he has set forth his views on the various subjects to which I have now referred, he deems it expedient to contrast them with the divergent or antagonistic views of some notable and influential thinkers, and is thus led to criticise the moral theses of Kant, the historical series of Hegel, the doctrine of the Saint-Simonian school, the Positivist theory of history, and the conceptions of Fourier as to history and social organisation.

I have already had occasion to observe that, in taking account of the historical philosophy of Renouvier, the Fourth Essay must not alone engage our attention; but I must still in connection with this first part of it refer to the valuable series of papers in the 'Critique Philosophique' on "the psychology of primitive man." Their criticisms of the arguments of those who maintain the primitive brutality of man, or who identify the primitive man with the modern savage, are among the best which have been anywhere presented. The examination to which they subject the hypotheses that have been set forth by Comte, Darwin, Lubbock, Tylor, Spencer, Bagehot, Romanes, and others, as to the origin of intelligence, speech, morality, religion, civilisation, and progress, is always relevant and acute, and often, I think, either to a large extent or wholly, just and decisive.

The second, third, and fourth parts of his treatise are devoted to the study of the history of religious beliefs and ideas.[1] He holds that in religions are contained nearly all that we know of remote antiquity; that they have always been intimately connected with the state of moral sentiment and even intellectual speculation; that the only proper method of investigating them is that of comparison, analysis, induction; and that all

[1] The early history of language he treats of in the 'Psychologie,' t. i., pp. 135-139, 2d ed.

a priori philosophies of history have arbitrarily and excessively simplified their course and succession,—their slow, multiple, unequal, and troubled march. He gives us his views of the duties and laws of historical criticism when applied to religions, and especially when required to deal with miracles, revelations, and prophets, with myths, symbols, and legends. He sets aside various erroneous or inadequate hypotheses as to primitive religion, inquires as to how the primitive man probably looked upon nature, and endeavours to define and account for fetichism. He shows that it is not at all necessary to suppose that religion originated with fetichism; and he describes the tribal religions —African, Boreal, Polynesian, and American—in which fetichism has prevailed. He compares, and analyses somewhat minutely, the religious and ethical systems of the Chinese and Egyptians.

The whole of the third part is occupied with the religions (understood as inclusive of the ethical and speculative conceptions or theories) of the Aryan world,—chiefly, indeed, with those of India, Greece, and Rome, but also with those of the Germans, Celts, &c.

The fourth part deals exclusively with the religions of the Semitic world. Here M. Renouvier begins by instituting an inquiry as to the chronological data, the traditions, and the documents which have to be taken into account. This inquiry he conducts in the spirit of the higher criticism, and with an obvious desire not to yield to any theological bias. He then discourses on the unity, divisions, and characteristics of the Semites. He thinks that, on merely physiological grounds, no one would pronounce the Semites and Aryans essentially distinct; that their intellectual and moral differences, both negative and positive, are, on the other hand, strongly marked, although they are not of such a character that we cannot easily suppose them to have originated at a greater or less distance from a basis of common qualities; but that the grammatical system common to the Aryan languages and that of the Semitic tongues are irreducible, and require us to regard the Aryan and Semitic peoples as primitive, until much stronger reasons to the contrary have been adduced than has yet been done. He proceeds carefully to characterise the Semitic race both intellectually and morally; to lay bare the roots of its

idea of Deity, and to determine the content of that idea, by the analysis of its names for Deity; and to connect the chief intellectual and moral division of the Semites with a "cruel scission," going back to the remotest age of which they retained any recollection. This "scission" may have been comparatively slight at first, but becoming ever deeper, it in time produced profound ethical and spiritual changes, and parted the race into two branches — the one monotheistic and the other polytheistic. He is thus naturally led to treat specially, first, of Semitic monotheism; and, secondly, of Semitic polytheism.

M. Renouvier does not carry his study of religions beyond what he calls *primary epochs.* He does not follow them into *secondary epochs,* those in which beliefs are developed into fully formed dogmas; or into *tertiary epochs,* those in which faith is revolutionised by the progress of science and the commingling of peoples. But the field of his investigation, even when thus limited, is a wide one. The number of distinct inquiries which he institutes is very great. And they are carefully, learnedly, and ably conducted. At the same time, their relations to one another and their bearings on the general aims of the Essay, are never lost sight of. Notwithstanding the merits, however, of the contributions to the Science of Religions contained in his treatise, M. Renouvier must, of course, find, in re-editing it, a good deal to alter in them, owing to the great advances made by this science in all directions since 1864.

In the last division of his history M. Renouvier sums up the conclusions to which his investigations have led him. His exposition of his views of progress is of special interest. The subject is treated with the earnestness which naturally springs from a clear view of its importance. He recognises how strongly the belief in progress differentiates the present from preceding ages, and how inevitably it must be either invigorating or enervating, either a source of virtue or a cause of demoralisation, according as it is of a rational and moral character, or the reverse. If it be a belief in a progress which produces good of necessity, which uses men as mere instruments, which does not require their self-devotion, their watchfulness, restraint, endurance, and labour, and, in a word, their virtue, it must be prejudicial to virtue, and to progress

itself. Profoundly convinced of this, M. Renouvier has been indefatigable in contending for truth and in assailing errors as to progress. What he says on the subject in the Fourth Essay is but a small part of what he has written concerning it. His papers in the 'Critique Philosophique' on the various questions connected with it are very numerous. In fact no writer has treated the theme with equal closeness or fulness. He is quite entitled to hold that his predecessors have in general dealt with it very superficially, his own treatment of it being so much more searching and profound.[1]

All forms of the doctrine of a continuous progress, and all theories of physical and mechanical, fatalistic and predestinarian, necessitarianism, from which it derives support, have found in him a most formidable assailant. He has been always ready to expose the optimistic illusions which abound on the subject. He admits the possibility of progress. "We must work for progress, therefore it is possible, and necessary at least that we believe it possible." It is possible for individuals and nations, in all spheres of human life and activity. And it is not only possible, but the analysis of facts shows that it has actually taken place during certain periods in the history of many peoples. No facts warrant us, however, to ascribe to it universality, continuity, or necessity. Deterioration has been as prevalent as amelioration. There has not been anywhere or in any respect uninterrupted progress. If we compare medieval Europe with ancient Greece and Rome in their prime, and apply proper criteria in an impartial manner, the former must be acknowledged to have been on a lower intellectual and moral level. If we examine into the history even of such a phenomenon as slavery, it will be found that for long periods and over wide spaces it was *not* liberty which gained ground. Europe is no more entitled to believe herself at present secure against future slow decadence or rapid collapse than Asia was when in her glory. France still requires to struggle with anxiety if she would even retain the liberties, rights, and

[1] In the series of papers entitled "Politique et Socialisme," published in the 'Critique Philosophique,' he has passed in review the systems of the chief theorists of progress,—Herder, Kant, Hegel, Turgot, Condorcet, Saint-Simon, Fourier, Comte, and Spencer.—See Années ix., t. xi. ; x., t. i.-xi. ; and xii., t. i.-xi.

advantages which she has with so much labour and difficulty gained. Those who have discoursed on progress have generally erred as to its point of departure. They have supposed it to have started from conditions which can only have been gradually produced. They have imagined a perfectible brutality for which there is no evidence to be found in history. They have not deemed it necessary to inquire by what marks societies are to be ranked as superior or inferior to others. They have not seriously endeavoured to determine what constitutes progress, and have, consequently, failed to see how inseparable it is from morality, and how necessarily it must be the work of individuals and of societies themselves. They have announced so-called laws of progress, but they have not proved that there is any such law in the proper sense of the term, any necessary rule and invariable succession of phenomena. Those which they have propounded either do not apply to, or are contradicted by, numbers of facts.

These theses, and others of a kindred nature, Renouvier has laboured on many occasions, and with great ability, to establish by critical and analytical disquisitions on the relevant data. A mere statement of them can do scarcely any justice to his theory of progress. To make it fully intelligible would require a long series of quotations, and of long quotations, such as would show the character of the method, and the general course of the argumentation, pursued. I must content myself with a single extract from the Fourth Essay. By simply transcribing the author's words I shall enable my readers to form some conception of his style as a philosophical writer,—a style to which neither a literal nor a free translation will do justice.

"Ce n'est qu'après avoir parcouru les périodes principales des faits, des idées et des croyances dans les différentes séries de l'humanité que je pourrai justifier en quel sens et sur quels sujets, dans quelles limites, pour quelles raisons, il y a eu progrès jusqu'à nous, et en quoi nous devons espérer que ce progrès se continuera à l'avenir. Les prestiges de la loi fatale se dissipant à nos yeux, avec les fausses relations historiques, qui ont été imaginées pour la servir, nous verrons cette grande loi se réduire pour l'expérience à un fait déjà bien considérable, savoir que la civilisation européenne est héritière des conquêtes morales et des travaux de plusieurs grandes races diversement douées et diversement méritantes; qu'elle est

parvenue sur ce fondement à prendre la conscience et la possession de ses propres fonctions à un degré jusqu'ici inconnu, à s'appuyer sur la notion même du progrès, et à créer des méthodes, à composer graduellement des sciences et des arts qui deviennent à leur tour des aides puissants de son perfectionnement.

"Au-dessus de ce fait immense, mais auquel l'humanité tout entière est si loin d'avoir participé, on peut ensuite concevoir deux lois; l'une serait la donnée divine et providentielle d'une destinée pour les hommes envisagés en un seul corps, destinée qu'ils attendraient indépendamment des fluctuations de la liberté, et peut-être par l'organe de certains d'entre eux seulement. L'autre serait une simple loi psychologique en vertu de laquelle l'action constante des bons mobiles, des bonnes passions fondamentales de la nature humaine, jointe à l'accumulation des mérites et des connaissances, pendant que toutes les déterminations fausses ou perverses de la volonté se détruirait mutuellement ou ne produiraient que des ondulations bientôt interrompues, conduirait infailliblement les sociétés à l'amelioration croissante de leurs relations et à la moralité de plus en plus grande de leurs membres.

"La croyance à une destinée est de l'essence de toute religion développée. Mais la fin que l'humanité doit atteindre, selon les croyances de ce genre, n'est pas toujours terrestre; elle n'est jamais promise à tous les hommes sans conditions; elle n'est pas attendue de leur seule vertu, mais il faut l'intervention d'un Dieu. Un but infaillible n'est fixé religièusement, soit à un homme, soit à une société, qu'autant que l'on croit à l'action divine sur l'âme ou sur le monde. Sans cela les vertus humaines individuelles ne suffiraient point, et les vices, à plus forte raison, demeureraient un empêchement. La destinée en ce sens ne peut donc être ni affirmée, ni combattue que dans la sphère des religions et de la critique religieuse. En un mot, ce ne saurait être une loi reconnaissable de l'histoire. Mais ceux qui posent la destinée temporelle sur une notion vague d'optimisme, avec une idée vague de Dieu pour garant, ou plutôt n'ayant pour tout Dieu que le Progrès même, ceux qui d'ailleurs effacent l'individu et son vrai caractère, qui méconnaissent la liberté et ses œuvres, qui exténuent le mal en le déclarant indifferent à l'obtention définitive du bien, ceux-là ne sortent du fatalisme vulgaire que par une religiosité sans base où manquent les éléments essentiels de la foi aussi bien que de la science et de l'histoire.

"Au premier aperçu, une loi psychologique, telle que je l'indiquais, paraîtrait se distinguer du fatalisme. Les produits de la liberté y sont reçus à condition de se neutraliser quand ils se dirigent en sens contraire du bien et du progrès; et il est très-vrai que l'accumulation des actes favorables, tant pour le mérite morale que pour les connaissances acquises et les œuvres réalisées, chez les nations comme chez les individus, est une loi qui se comprend clairement, et d'ail-

leurs s'observe et se vérifie. Or, cette loi est précisément le progrès. Il serait certain et se continuerait indéfiniment si le mal ne venait point à la traverse, si les erreurs, les vices, les crimes n'avaient aussi leur résultats et leurs accumulations, chez les nations comme chez les individus. Mais la croissance du mal se conçoit non moins aisément que la croissance du bien. Les exemples n'en sont pas rares: on en trouve sur toute échelle, dans l'homme, dans le monde, dans l'histoire. Il m'est donc impossible d'admettre que les actes de déviation, en égard à la loi et aux vérités morales, soient nécessairement et par leur nature appelés à s'annuler mutuellement et à disparaître dans les resultantes. Au contraire, je crois avoir montré comment les lois de l'habitude et de la solidarité étendent, généralisent et prolongent les effets des premières aberrations de la conscience, dans une série quelconque de déterminations individuelles ou sociales. L'expérience la plus sommaire, un seul regard sur la vie des peuples confirment suffisament ici l'analyse psychologique, pour tout esprit que ne dominent pas de fortes préventions.

"Il est incontestable, et c'est encore un fait qu'on peut hardiment appeler historique et général, aussi bien que singulier et d'expérience personelle, que ces premières aberrations dont je parle, n'ont été épargnées aux auteurs d'aucune race. Il s'ensuit de là que la loi du progrès, sur quelques pointes qu'elle porte, et quelles que soient les nations assez heureuses pour s'être affermies dans la voie du bien, ne saurait en tout cas exister simplement, naturellement, et s'être manifestée dès le point de départ de la conscience. C'est au contraire une déchéance morale qui s'est caractérisée partout à l'origine ou dès les premiers termes de l'exercise de l'arbitre humaine. Je suppose, en effet, que l'homme a dû commencer sa carrière en tant qu'homme, c'est-à-dire sous la loi de moralité et sous l'impression de cette loi. Je le suppose, faute de pouvoir comprendre un autre commencement, une autre nature première, ou un passage de cette première à une seconde nature; et parce qu'il faut de toute nécessité, indépendamment de toute hypothèse sur les origines physiques, envisager quelque part et de quelque manière un commencement moral pour un être moral, et des données historiques primitives de conscience, de réflexion, de raison, de justice, pour un être qui a développé tout cela dans l'histoire."

M. Renouvier has supplemented the exposition of his analytical philosophy of history by an original, if not unique, attempt to reconstruct history hypothetically, in order to illustrate how it might have been quite other than, and much better than, it has been. Many authors have delineated Utopias which they located in the future; M. Renouvier has ventured on the much more difficult but also much more instructive task of picturing

a Utopia in the past, and as realised under historically probable conditions, while yet most unlike what actually occurred. I refer to his 'Uchronie (L'Utopie dans l'Histoire),' 1876, which bears the alternative and explanatory title, 'An Historical and Apocryphal Sketch of European Civilisation, not as it was, but as it might have been.'

The design of the work is to help its readers to realise the superficiality and unreasonableness of historical optimism and necessitarianism. To attain this end it presents us with the outline of an apocryphal or hypothetical history, feigned to have been written at the beginning of the seventeenth century by a free-thinking monk on the eve of being burned by the Inquisition at Rome. In this sketch the whole course of European civilisation, from the age of Marcus Aurelius to that of the supposed author of the narrative, is described as having been altogether different from the course which it actually took. The ancient civilisation which was, in fact, left to decline and die through the unchecked growth of its corrupt and destructive tendencies, is set before us as having been restored to health and vigour by the wise and steady application of remedial and reformatory measures. Christianity, which in fact displaced it, but under a debased, superstitious, and intolerant form, is represented as having been thrown back into the East, and as only readmitted into the West long afterwards, when it could be received in its true character into a society ordered on principles of reason. The ideal of society which the best minds of the present day are still only striving after, is pictured and prefigured as one which had been already reached. In appendices, dated 1658 and 1709, and notes of an assumed editor of the present day, the reader is reminded of what was the actual and "worse" course of history, which he is expected to compare with the hypothetical and better one.

The 'Uchronie' makes no pretension to *disprove* the doctrines of historical necessitarianism and optimism. It is obvious that, strictly speaking, no doctrine can be either proved or disproved by the inventions and constructions of imagination. But imagination may, by ingeniously elaborating and supporting in opposition to a doctrine which is merely an hypothesis, without any real warrant in facts, a counter-hypothesis, cause the

arbitrariness and baselessness of a prevalent assumption to be vividly seen, and may thus both effectively and legitimately discredit it. This is what M. Renouvier has attempted, and accomplished, in the 'Uchronie.'

I shall offer no criticisms on his historical doctrine. It is one to which, in all its fundamental principles and positions, I assent. I do not know any other writer with whose views on the chief problems of historical philosophy my own are so much in accordance. And he has, in my opinion, rendered to that philosophy one service so inestimable, that in any account of its development his name deserves to be placed in the very foremost rank of its cultivators. He has shown, far more profoundly and conclusively than any one else, the closeness of the connection between history and morality; that neither is intelligible or realisable without the other; that history is an ethical formation and morality an historical production. He has made apparent by a critical analysis of the historical process itself that it is in the exercise of rational freedom that societies, as well as individuals, have risen or sunk, elevated or debased themselves. He has disclosed the manner in which families, tribes, and nations have acquired for themselves a common character, fixed habits and manners. He has explained how *ethic races* are formed, and of how much greater significance they are for the understanding of history than merely *ethnic races*, or the external causes which originate or modify these latter races. He has refuted, in a way at once original, profound, and conclusive, those theories which represent history as a mechanically necessitated product, or an inevitable dialectic movement, or a simple organic growth, or the natural consequence of a struggle for existence between individuals and societies, or a fundamentally economic evolution. He has proved it to be, on the contrary, an essentially ethical creation, the formation of the world of humanity by free individual wills, always conscious of moral law, while always working in given conditions of time and space, of heredity and solidarity, and always influenced by interests and passions, by physical and spiritual surroundings.

It would not be appropriate to discuss in this work the general philosophy of M. Renouvier.

His teaching for a long time attracted little attention. During the last twenty years its influence on the philosophical, theological, and political thought of France has been considerable; and it can hardly fail to increase. The number of what would be called his disciples is not large, and may never be so. M. Pillon has most completely assimilated his doctrine, and is a very able expositor of it. In part and in applications it has been widely adopted. M. Lavisse's 'Vue générale de l'Histoire politique de l'Europe' may be referred to as a fine exemplification of its principles in the purely historical sphere.

Little has been done for Historic in France during recent years. M. Tardif's 'Notions Élémentaires de Critique Historique,' 1883, presents us with a mere outline of the subject. M. Rabier, in the second volume of his 'Leçons de Philosophie,'[1] has treated with characteristic judiciousness of "testimony," "historical criticism," and "the method of social science"; but he has not left the beaten path and attempted to explore new territory. M. Seignobos, in his articles on "Les conditions psychologiques de la connaissance en histoire," in the 'Revue Philosophique,'[2] has made a careful study of the problem, How is any particular historical proposition to be reached? In dealing with it he inquires as to (1) the character of historical knowledge, (2) its materials, (3) the conditions necessary to disengage any historical proposition, (4) the conditions necessary for attaining a proposition which is certain, (5) what vices of method lead to false or uncertain propositions, and (6) in what sense history is verifiable. Thus, although he excludes from consideration the question as to how general propositions in history are to be attained, his investigation is not wanting either in breadth or interest. He reaches the following conclusions. "Historical knowledge is an indirect knowledge only attainable by reasoning. The documents which supply the starting-points of the reasonings only make known to us psychological operations. History arrives at a conclusion only through the reconstitution of these operations. It can do so only by means of a series of psychological analyses and of analogical reasonings of which the major premisses are bor-

[1] Ch. xvii., pp. 316-345. [2] Douzième Année, Nos. 7 and 8.

rowed from descriptive psychology. Almost all faults of method proceed from errors of psychology." M. Seignobos has clearly recognised the importance of the study of the historical method. "Almost all that we know of men and of societies is reducible to historical knowledge. The historical method not only rules in the sciences called historical which operate on ancient phenomena, but in all the psychological and social sciences, because they operate on fleeting and complex phenomena. It is necessary not only to the historians of the past, but to every one who studies human societies. History is only entitled to a small place in the whole of knowledge; but the logic of the sciences should give a large place to the study of the historical method, for it is the method of *all indirect knowledge*." I cannot entirely subscribe to these words, inasmuch as it seems to me that history, properly understood, is coextensive with the historical method; but their author is entirely right as to the wide range of the historical method, and the importance of its study. It is deplorable that historians should show so little interest as they actually manifest in "the logic of the sciences," or even of the science which they themselves cultivate. It is no valid excuse for them that almost all other classes of scientists are in the same respect chargeable with the same fault.[1]

[1] In the writings of M. Fouillée and of the late M. Guyau an interesting form of criticist thought is allied with remarkably original and ingenious sociological speculations. They are rich in fresh and suggestive views, brilliantly expounded, relating to the evolution of morals, law, art, and religion, and undoubtedly falling within the sphere of historical philosophy. My not attempting to give in this place any account of these views is not owing to want of appreciation of their importance, but because I wish to contrast and compare the most distinctive and fundamental of them with the correlative evolutionist conclusions of Mr Herbert Spencer.

M. Tarde, well known by his studies in criminology and the philosophy of penal law, has also published a most original and ingenious treatise on Sociology, entitled 'Les Lois de l'Imitation,' 1890. He has dedicated it to the memory of Cournot, and he is, although not a pupil or disciple of that author, a thinker of the same order. He seems to me to have been very fairly successful in his endeavour to "delineate a General Sociology of which the laws are applicable to all societies actual, past, or possible, as the laws of General Physiology are to all species living, extinct, or conceivable." He has at least shown that there is another sort of Sociology than the merely descriptive study commonly so called. In reducing the social world to imitations and their laws, and history to initi-

atives which have been the most imitated, he has begun to render to Sociology a service of the same kind as the associationists have rendered to Psychology. It is to be hoped that he may himself follow up the investigations which he has begun, and that he may also have not a few imitators. I shall not now summarise the views which he has set forth in his sociological treatise, most able and valuable although it be, as, if permitted to carry this work to completion, I shall have to take special account of them when I attempt to determine the relation of Sociology to History and its Philosophy.

The works of the late M. Fustel de Coulanges are among the most brilliant exemplifications of a strictly critical and historical method. They are eminently worthy of study even from the merely methodological point of view. As regards their general characteristics, and the light which they have thrown on the transformations of society in general, and of the early history of French institutions in particular, it may be enough to refer to the *Notices* of M. Sorel in vol. 35, and of M. Jules Simon in vol. 37 of the 'Travaux de l'Académie des Sciences Morales et Politiques.'

CHAPTER XII.

HISTORICAL PHILOSOPHY IN BELGIUM AND SWITZERLAND.

I.

The geologists of Belgium have shown that their country had human inhabitants many thousands of years before history began to be recorded in writing. When Cæsar conquered Gaul, the most powerful and warlike portion of its population were the Belgians, comprising a number of peoples, partly of Celtic and partly of Teutonic origin, and occupying the territory north of the Seine and the Marne. Every part of the soil of the Belgium of to-day is historic ground; its towns and provinces have had long, changeful, and eventful histories, and have not lacked chroniclers to record what happened in them worthy of remembrance. The historical spirit was early awakened in Belgium. I have already had occasion to refer to Eginhard and Suger, to Froissart and Comines; but Belgium can claim them at least as justly as France. Here, however, I shall not go farther back than to the origin of the kingdom of Belgium; and that is of quite recent date.

In 1830 the provinces of which it is composed seceded from the Netherlands, and succeeded in becoming an independent state. This result was accomplished through a combination of clericals and liberals; and the Constitution of the new kingdom was necessarily a compromise between two irreconcilable parties which have since been in constant and often keen conflict. It was a Constitution framed with wisdom; one which safeguarded the rights of individuals and of associations, and which allowed extensive powers of self-government to communes and provinces; and although it has been repeatedly

attacked, and been often in serious danger, it has, owing to the intelligence and patriotism of Leopold I. and Leopold II., the sagacity of its political leaders, and the general good sense of an exceptionally enlightened and energetic people, remained unviolated. Under it the nation has not only prospered greatly, but greatly distinguished itself in all the chief departments of human activity.

The Belgian people is composed of two races, the one mainly of Celtic and the other mainly of Teutonic extraction. It has three languages: Flemish, closely allied to Dutch; Walloon, an old dialect of French; and French. In all these languages there is a considerable amount of literature, but only in French is there any literature of the kind which here concerns us. Belgian thought has been greatly affected both by French and German influences, but more by the former than by the latter. Belgium has offered a safe asylum to the victims of party violence who have fled to it from other lands, and a favourable soil for the propagation of new ideas and the application of new systems of a social and practical character. Speculative philosophy has not found in it a congenial home. Owing to its connection with Holland, Belgium started well as regards education; and it continues to be a relatively well-educated country, although instruction is too much under the control of the clergy, and the extent of illiteracy is considerable. It has numerous gymnasia and diocesan seminaries, and four universities—Ghent, Liége, Brussels, and Louvain; the two former being State institutions; that of Brussels independent both of Church and State; and that of Louvain under the direction of the episcopate. In Ghent history is taught by seven professors, in Liége by five, in Brussels by four, and in Louvain by three, exclusive of those who teach history of philosophy, of literature, of law, &c. Historical research has been, like science, literature, and art, greatly indebted to the Royal Academy of Belgium. The Roman Catholic Church contains the vast majority of the professing Christians of Belgium; but its power is to a large extent counterbalanced by the prevalence of religious rationalism and scepticism. The most enlightened and energetic portion of the nation is anti-clerical. Nowhere has the religious question been a more burning question than in

Belgium; and nowhere has history been more discussed in connection with it. That Socialism should have widely spread in a country so densely peopled as Belgium, and with such large and concentrated masses of poorly paid workmen, is altogether natural. It had adherents among those who founded the new kingdom; has been engaged ever since in more or less successful propagandism; and is very prevalent and active at present. I have thus referred to these facts, elementary although they be, because they are really those which have had most influence on the development of historical thought in Belgium.

There has been displayed in Belgium since 1830 remarkable activity in the department of historiography, and especially of national historiography. A comprehensive and graphic picture of that activity and its results has been drawn by the skilful hand of M. Ch. Potvin in 'Cinquante Ans de Liberté' (tom. iv.); and to it I must be content simply to refer my readers.[1]

The first writer in Belgium to draw general attention to the philosophy of history was J. J. Altmeyer (1804-75). When the University of Brussels was created he was appointed professor of history; and in 1836 he published a brief 'Introduction à l'Étude philosophique de l'histoire de l'humanité.' It consists of a discourse supplemented with notes. He himself speaks of the discourse as "ce chant"; and it is certainly of a rather lyrical and militant strain. It recalls in spirit, content, and form Michelet's 'Introduction to Universal History.' It also shows traces of the influence of Vico, Ballanche, Buchez, Considérant, Lamennais, Gerbet, and other historical philosophers. "History," he says, "is the dialectic of the spirit, the universal judgment, the story of the gradual progress of humanity towards its physical, intellectual, and moral amelioration. This progress has caused a struggle between two hostile elements, spirit and matter, moral force and brutal force; elements which combat, dethrone, and sub-

[1] 'Cinquante Ans de Liberté,' 4 vols., 1881-82, shows what had been accomplished in Belgium from 1830 to 1880 in all the chief departments of human activity. The scheme of distribution is as follows: Vol. i., Political Life, by Count Goblet d'Alviella; Education, by Emile Greyson; Political Economy, by Julian Schaar. Vol. ii., Physical and Mathematical Sciences, by Ch. and E. Lagrange; Natural Sciences, by A. Gilkinet. Vol. iii., Painting and Sculpture, by C. Lermonnier; Music, by Ad. Samuel. Vol. iv., History of Literature, by Ch. Potvin.

jugate each other. This struggle is as old as the world; yet it is not infinite; but no mortal can pretend to predict when it will cease; that is covered with the veil of the Egyptian Isis." In this work Altmeyer shows no evidence of acquaintance with the doctrine of Krause, to which he was so soon to become a convert; but he shows a certain preparedness of spirit for its reception in his ardent faith in a divine kingdom of harmony to result from realisation of the providential plan which pervades history. "The highest degree of perfection," he says, "to which man is destined, arises from the complete and free development of his personality in the kingdom of truth, beauty, and goodness, and in the closest union with his fellow-men. The principle of perfectibility must, therefore, introduce a state in which matter and spirit, reconciled, reunited, and commingled, will form a beautiful, grand, and finished harmony; in which all specialities will find their object, and occupy their proper sphere of activity; in which men, instead of exhausting their forces in fighting one another, will employ them to complete the subjugation of nature; in which the injury done to one, being of advantage to no other, will be regarded as injurious to the whole society; in which the annihilation of evil will put an end to the war between good and evil, a war of which there will survive only a generous emulation among the good when there is opportunity for doing good; a state, in short, of rest which will not be inaction, and a state of action which will not be tumultuous agitation."

Four years later Altmeyer published a larger work, his 'Cours de Philosophie de l'Histoire,' 1840. It is composed of fifteen lectures, which were delivered before 500 hearers. It is said, there would have been 3000 of an audience if a large enough hall could have been found. The interest in them thus manifested was, doubtless, partly due to the fact that the war between liberalism and clericalism was at that time intensely keen, and had penetrated into the universities, so that Brussels was arrayed against Louvain, "chair against chair, tribune against tribune." Between the 'Introduction' and the 'Cours' there was one great difference, owing to the fact that in the interval between their publication Altmeyer had been com-

pletely converted by his colleague, the celebrated German jurist, Henry Ahrens, to Krauseanism. The latter work, accordingly, is essentially an exposition of the Krausean theory of human development, and a detailed application of it to the stage of development represented by the oriental world. In the first lecture he himself thus speaks: "The theory, gentlemen, of which I have just expounded the first principles, and which I shall have the honour to develop to you in its entirety, before applying it to the special facts, belongs, in substance, to a philosopher still little known, but the greatest that can be cited since Leibniz; to Krause, whose high significance my honourable colleague, M. Ahrens, has made known and felt Great theologians, illustrious philosophers, from Bossuet to Hegel, have treated eloquently, profoundly, one or several parts of the philosophy of history; but in their writings you will vainly seek a complete system, a satisfactory theory, on the development of humanity. Krause is the first who has laid down *a priori* the laws to which humanity is providentially submitted, and which it must accomplish in the full exercise of its freedom; and he has shown how these laws are related to the general movement of humanity. When this theoretical exposition is concluded, we shall set out on our march from the high regions of Asia, and try to follow step by step in the path of the human race, across time and space, along the movement of ideas, passions, and facts; confronting with the discoveries of Krause the development of the peoples, and in verifying them if we can, to recognise a new title of glory in a man who has already so many others, and, in particular, that of having lived a martyr to his convictions." The first eight lectures contain the exposition of the theoretical part of the Krausean philosophy of history, and the seven which follow inquire as to the truth of it so far as that can be ascertained from the history of the Asiatic peoples. A complete philosophical survey of history was contemplated, but the intention was not realised.

The most eminent Belgian representative of the school of Krause is M. Guillaume Tiberghien. He was born in 1819; was a pupil of Ahrens and Altmeyer; and as professor of philosophy has long adorned the University of Brussels. He

has published treatises on almost all the chief departments of philosophy—metaphysics, logic, psychology, ethics, and the theory of religion. They are characterised by clearness and consistency of thought, and by elegance and precision of language. Most of them have been translated into Spanish, and some of them into Portuguese. He has greatly contributed to the diffusion of the principles of Krause, not only in Belgium, but also in the Iberian peninsula. No one, indeed, has presented the doctrine of Krause in a more attractive form.

In his 'Introduction à la Philosophie' there is a masterly sketch of the philosophy of history as it is to be seen in the light of the philosophy of Krause. All the chief traits of the movement of humanity, when so contemplated, are there admirably indicated in the brief compass of 150 pages. I can, of course, here merely refer to them, as I must reserve what I have to say of the Krausean philosophy of history until I reach Krause himself. It is not inappropriate, however, to add that, both in the work just named and in his celebrated 'Essai théorique et historique sur la Génération des Connaissances Humaines,' M. Tiberghien has striven to show by a survey and criticism of all the chief systems of philosophy that that of Krause alone satisfies all the requirements of science and all the aspirations of the age which has at length arrived, the age of the maturity of humanity, the age of harmony and of organisation.

I now pass to one whose work must be longer under our consideration. Francois Laurent was born at Luxembourg in 1810; studied at the Universities of Louvain and Liége; was appointed professor at Ghent in 1836; published from 1850 to 1870 the eighteen volumes of 'Études sur l'histoire de l'humanité,' to which he owes his fame as an historical philosopher, and from 1869 to 1879 the thirty-two-volumed work, 'Principes de Droit Civil'; likewise, a 'Cours élémentaire de Droit Civil,' 4 vols., 'Droit Civil International,' 8 vols., and numerous pamphlets, mostly of a polemical character. His activity was not confined to his labours as professor and publicist, but showed itself also in those of a communal councillor, an organiser of workmen's societies, and a director of evening schools. Singularly disinterested and self-sacrificing,

he lived almost as an anchorite, dressed almost as a peasant, and devoted his entire time and strength to propagate his faith and to promote the good of his fellow-men. He retired from his professorship in 1882, and died in 1887.[1]

The work of Laurent with which we are concerned is his 'Studies on the History of Humanity.' Its publication, as has been already stated, extended over twenty years. Its author was privileged to study every stage of human history known to us through written documents leisurely and long enough to enable him to master the contents of the original sources of information, and of the principal treatises of the more eminent scholars of all times and countries; to trace, age after age, with independence and profundity, the development of society, and of the ideas most influential in preserving and regulating it; and to communicate to the world the results of his researches and reflections in a long series of volumes, each devoted to some great epoch of time — the East, Greece, Rome, Christianity, the Barbarians and Catholicism, the Papacy and the Empire, Feudalism and the Church, the Reformation, the Wars of Religion, &c. In this vast monument of toil and talent, moral earnestness, independence of judgment, and diligence in research are conspicuous qualities; and equally so is the desire to comprehend the meaning and purpose of facts, to discover the ideas which underlie events. In facts by themselves, facts out of which no thoughts can be extracted, M. Laurent manifested no interest; in all facts, on the other hand, which could be seen to have influenced the essential destiny of man, to have helped or hindered the human race in its struggle for freedom and justice, he showed an almost too passionate interest.

The last volume of the work is entitled 'La Philosophie de l'Histoire.' It is partly a *résumé* of the volumes which preceded it. It also expounds the general doctrine involved and established in those volumes. That it is thus the summary and conclusion of such a series of elaborate and masterly "studies" confers on it an authority which it could not have

[1] See the article of M. Ernest Nys on "François Laurent, sa vie et ses œuvres," in the 'Rev. de Droit International,' t. xix. M. Nys is himself the author of learned 'Recherches sur l'Histoire de Droit,' of interest to students of the history of historical philosophy.

possessed had it stood alone. It not only speaks for itself, but all its predecessors speak for it and through it. The same circumstance, however, which greatly enhances its value in one respect, has not proved favourable to it in another; and is, indeed, the chief reason why it falls so far short of being a philosophy of history. M. Laurent's work has for alternative title 'History of the Law of Nations and of International Relations.' That title is too narrow, and the author did well to take the more general one of 'Studies on the History of Humanity'; still these "studies" are mainly on the moral history of humanity, on its progress in the knowledge and practice of justice and benevolence, on the growth of man's insight into and reverence for the law of conscience both as regards himself and his fellow-men. Now, notwithstanding its title, M. Laurent's 'Philosophy of History' is so much the summary of the "studies" that it deals exclusively with the same phase of human development, and overlooks the scientific, the æsthetic, and the industrial evolution of society. It is, consequently, not, properly speaking, the philosophy of history, not the scientific comprehension of history as a whole.

It was doubtless, in part at least, owing to the same circumstance, that M. Laurent made no attempt to determine the problem of the philosophy of history, to define or describe what that philosophy ought to do; none to lay for it a foundation in the science of human nature, or even to indicate its relationship to the science of human nature; none to fix its general position among the sciences; and none to ascertain the methods required for its successful study. These are serious omissions in a work professing to be a philosophy of history. They are explained in the case of M. Laurent's volume by its author having proceeded at once to enunciate the general theory which had underlain and directed his anterior labours.

In the Introduction he expounds his own views regarding the immanence of God in humanity, the coexistence of divine Providence and human liberty, and the reality of progress, moral and religious progress not excluded; and attacks the views of those who would banish God from history, or acknowledge the working of the devil in history. He argues that there can be no philosophy of history unless it be admitted that

God is present in the minds and hearts of all men, controls and guides the entire series of events, and, while respecting human freedom, is continually raising the human race to higher stages of being. Naturally we ask,—Does not history, then, prove these truths? And to our astonishment we find that M. Laurent not only believes it does, but believes that these truths with their proofs actually constitute the philosophy of history. Why the philosophy of history should presuppose what it can prove, or even how it can presuppose what it is the proof of, he does not explain. And, in fact, his conception of the relation of theology or theodicy to the science of history appears to be just the reverse of the truth. He represents the science of history as a department of natural theology, when all that can be properly maintained is, that there is a department of natural theology the truths of which may be legitimately inferred from the findings of the science of history. The science of itself—*i.e.*, in its strictest and narrowest sense, or as distinguished from the philosophy of history,—neither requires nor admits of any theological presuppositions.

M. Laurent conceives of the philosophy of history as a theodicy. His point of view is not the scientific as exclusive of the religious, but the religious as inclusive of the scientific. It may, perhaps, be too little scientific, too much religious. The principle of final causes was a ruling one in Laurent's mind. Each event, each institution, suggests to him the questions—What was the design of it? What did man intend by it? What did God intend by it? The ideas of efficient causation and of law are much less prominent. He is more concerned to know why events happened than how they happened. He does not neglect to inquire into how great social changes were effected, but his chief interest in the inquiry is that he may be helped thereby to understand why these changes were brought about, what their place and significance were in the providential plan of the universe.

It is altogether with reference to his own historical theodicy that Laurent treats of the historical theories of his predecessors. He makes no attempt to give any general survey of the course of the philosophy of history, or even any general estimate of the chief systems of that philosophy. He simply chooses cer-

tain representative specimens of those historical doctrines which imply the truth of miracle, chance, or fatalism; which deny, explicitly or implicitly, the immanence of God, and the progressive, providential, non-miraculous education of man through the Spirit of God acting on reason and free-will; and these he subjects to a severe and hostile criticism. In Bossuet he sees only an advocate of the miraculous government of Providence; in Vico, of ancient fatalism; in Voltaire and Frederick II., of chance; in Montesquieu, of the fatalism of climate; in Herder, of that of nature; in Renan, of that of race; in Thiers, of revolutionary fatalism; in Hegel, of pantheistic fatalism; in Comte, of positivist fatalism; and in Buckle, of the fatalism of general laws. He regards them only, in other words, as the teachers of false and mischievous doctrines; and as such he assails them earnestly and indignantly. I fully admit that he had a right so to proceed. I regard the notion, at present so prevalent, that all criticism ought to be sympathetic, and occupy itself chiefly in the discovery of merits or excuses as a superficial conceit of a literary *dilettanteism*, itself the product of unbelief in truth and morality. But it is not to be denied that an exclusively negative and polemic criticism, however legitimate or even necessary it may sometimes be, has always its dangers. It is apt to be passionate and extreme; to overlook conditions and limitations which ought to be taken into account; to fancy it finds error where there is none, or at least more of it than there is. It seems to me that this is to a considerable extent true of Laurent's criticism of the historical theories which he examines. At the same time, it is throughly honest and remarkably able criticism.

He proceeds to attempt to prove, by an examination of the facts of history as a whole, that God has been ever present therein in wisdom, and justice, and power. Taking up in succession antiquity, Christianity, and the barbarian invasions, feudalism, the Reformation, and the Revolution, he strives to show in each case that what man willed was not what God willed, and has accomplished, but something lower, something less, if not even something contrary. Man has been continually growing in the knowledge of God's will; but even yet he has no more than a vague and dim perception of the general plan

of His providence, although in looking back he can clearly enough see that there was a plan underlying events which those who took part in them never dreamt of, being engrossed in far other plans of their own. Laurent has attempted to establish this by an examination of the actual facts of history, and by what is entitled to be regarded as a most minute and searching examination of these facts, seeing that the argument summed up in book i. chap. ii. of this eighteenth volume has been carried through all the previous seventeen volumes. In doing so he seems to me to have made a most valuable contribution not only to historical philosophy but also to natural theology; to have successfully shown, what professed natural theologians have so strangely overlooked, that not less than the heavens and earth—nay, that much more than either—does history declare the glory of God.

The conclusiveness of his argumentation has been challenged by Professor Jürgen Bona Meyer, but on quite insufficient grounds.[1] The first of the two objections urged by the professor is as follows: "The fact that the consequences of human actions are frequently not those which the agents willed, and that in virtue of this contradiction between the willed and the accomplished, men obtain against their wills what is best for them, is capable of explanation from the natural reaction and counteraction of the appropriately arranged forces of the physical and moral worlds. The examination of history enables us only to recognise this natural antagonism of the forces which it comprehends; and to refer their order, their disposition, to a divine power, is an act of faith not involved in the historical investigation. In order to help in strengthening faith in a divine government of the world, the study of history would require to lead to results which admit of no sufficient explanation from the natural concatenation of what has happened, or from the free wills of men. But such results are just those to which M. Laurent's point of view does not lead."

It is inexplicable how Professor Meyer—usually a most careful writer—could have so misunderstood M. Laurent's argument as he has here done; and how he could have overlooked the numerous passages, the pages after pages, in which M. Laurent

[1] Von Sybel's Historische Zeitschrift, Bd. xxv. s. 377.

had done all that was possible, and far more than seemed necessary, to make misunderstanding of the kind impossible. The argument of M. Laurent is that the examination of history discloses a plan pervading human affairs which has been realised through the operation of the forces of the physical and moral worlds, through the actions of human beings influenced by their surroundings, but which is not their plan : a plan which has not originated with man, which has not originated with matter, which cannot be the work of chance, which cannot be an effect without a cause, and which must therefore be ascribed to God. Again and again he states his argument substantially so ; and yet Professor Meyer thinks it relevant to object that the fact that what is wished is often not what is attained can be explained from the natural reaction and counteraction of the appropriately arranged historical forces, as if M. Laurent had failed to raise the question, Who arranged these forces ? and as if he had never argued that it could not be nothing, could not be chance, could not be nature, could not be general laws, could not be man, but must be God. What is the avowed purpose of the whole 237 pages of introduction and criticism which precede his examination of the facts ? Here is an abridgment of what he himself says : "We have passed in review all the theories imagined by philosophers and historians to explain the mysterious fact that there is in the life of a man unfolded in history a succession, a plan, a development which cannot be referred to man himself. Some, despairing from the outset to find a solution, make of their ignorance a blind power which they call hazard. Evidently that is no solution. Hazard is a word, and nothing more. Other writers—the majority of writers—say that this mysterious power is nature, under the form of climate, or races, or the whole of the physical influences which act on the moral world. But what is nature ? Whence has it this power, this foresight, this intelligence, which are so conspicuous in the course of our destinies ? If nature is matter, and nothing but matter, that too is no answer. Who will believe that matter acts with wisdom, with intelligence ? Where there is intelligent action there must be an intelligent being ; therefore nature leads us to God. Finally, there are those who substitute for nature general laws. But do not laws suppose a legislator ?

And who can this legislator be if not God?"[1] These are the conclusions, I repeat, which M. Laurent devotes the first 237 pages of his work to enforce,—partly by expounding his own views, and partly by assailing those of others. And then he occupies the 134 pages which follow with an examination of the facts of history as a whole, undertaken expressly and exclusively to show that they necessitate the same conclusions. In these circumstances, Professor Meyer's objection must be held quite unreasonable. And indeed it seems to me, no objection can possibly apply to M. Laurent's reasoning which would not equally apply to every form of theistical argument from effect to cause, from plan to designer, from course of procedure to character of the agent. He does not pretend that history proves to us the presence of God as it proves to us that a certain battle took place, or that a certain law was passed, but that it proves it as clearly as nature does. He takes no notice of objections, like those formulated by Kant, against all theological reasonings which are based on empirical facts, and assume the validity, beyond the bounds of experience, of the principles either of efficient or final causes; but against all less sweeping and radical objections he has made his position quite secure.

Professor Meyer proceeds: "Laurent's point of view is likewise suspicious, since it leads to misinterpretation of the will of men, in order thereby to exalt so much the more the will of God. He has fallen into this error, for example, when he maintains that Christ had not the intention of founding a new religion, but of preparing men for the near end of all things. Indeed he has been misled throughout by his false point of view to follow the course of the human will mainly in the direction of perversity and evil."

Now it is true that M. Laurent has maintained that Christ in preaching the gospel of the kingdom willed what God did not will, and has accomplished not what He Himself willed, but what God willed. The cause of that, however, was not the general point of view from which he argued for the presence of God in history, but simply the fact that for the reasons which he gives in the fourth volume of his work, that entitled

[1] Pp. 239, 240.

'Etude sur le Christianisme,' he rejected Christianity as a special divine revelation. We may regret that a man who in every page of his work shows so profound and living a sense of the presence and providence of God, should not have had a deeper insight into the character and mission of Christ; but there are no grounds for attributing his defective vision to his historical "point of view."

The general assertion of Professor Meyer, that M. Laurent's point of view has led him throughout to seek chiefly the evidences of perversity and evil in the motives of men, is utterly baseless. What M. Laurent really seeks chiefly throughout his work are the evidences of man's progressive apprehension of the plan and purposes of God in human life, of his own rights to liberty and equality, of religious truth and moral duty. His argument requires him to lay no undue stress on the perversity and wickedness of men's wills. It is enough for it that men's wills have not been coincident with God's will; that their purposes have been narrower and meaner than His plans; that high as are the heavens above the earth, so high have been His thoughts above their thoughts.

The second and last book of M. Laurent's 'Philosophy of History' treats of progress in history. It is, in fact, an inductive proof of the reality of the progress of man, individually and nationally, in all ethical directions. In a chapter on "The Individual and his Rights," the author traces the growth of liberty and equality in the oriental theocracies, in the classical nations, in the Christian Church, in Germanic and feudal society; and concludes by warning against the individualism which denies the rights of the State, and the socialism which denies the rights of the person. In the second chapter—"The Individual and his Duties"—he argues that the facts of history viewed along its whole course indubitably establish that there has been both a religious and a moral progress in the personal lives of men,—a growth in spiritual truth and an emancipation from spiritual errors, a growth in purity and delicacy of feeling as to relations between the sexes, a decrease of cruelty, &c. From individuals with their rights and duties he passes to nations and their relations. The third chapter dwells on the signifi-

cance of nationality, and gives an historical exposition of the formation of nationalities in humanity, or of the differentiation of humanity into nationalities. Here Laurent shows how the variety of nations in the unity of humanity contributes to the profound and exhaustive development of the soul, and to the advancement of the race in knowledge and morality; how different from true national feeling were the sentiments which united the subjects of Asiatic despotisms and the inhabitants of Greek cities, and which impelled the Romans to constant aggression on their neighbours; how the principle of nationality was affected by Christianity and the Papacy; how it was furthered by the Renaissance and the Reformation; how its course was modified by the Monarchy, the Revolution, and Napoleon; and how, in still more recent times, it has made itself known and felt in all directions as never before, seeing that in peace and war the peoples are everywhere appearing with the assertion of their right to decide for themselves, to be themselves the central and conspicuous figures in whatever drama Providence composes for them. Along with the idea of nationality itself there gradually grows up this other, that nation is bound to nation by ties of justice and nature; that they have rights and responsibilities, mutual obligations and interests; that they are members of humanity, a brotherhood, a family, and that a wrong done by one to another, by the strongest to the weakest, is fratricidal and unholy. The growth of this idea, or, in other words, the growth of a true recognition of the moral relations in which nations stand to one another, of how they ought to feel and act towards one another, is traced from the earliest to the latest times in the last chapter of M. Laurent's work, and certain speculations connected therewith bearing on the future prospects of humanity are discussed. A hopeful, yet not utopian, spirit characterises all his speculations as to the future.

The conclusions relative to progress, which have their evidence summarily stated in these four chapters, and presented in the seventeen volumes of the 'Études' with a fulness never before equalled, are far from composing a complete philosophy of history, or even of historical progress; but they are most

important conclusions, which every philosophy of history must undoubtedly recognise. Laurent is entitled to be remembered with all gratitude for the enormous labour he bestowed on their demonstration.

While Altmeyer and Laurent treated history in the manner described, the Churchly or Catholic theory also found expositors and defenders in Belgium.

The first Professor of General History in the Catholic University of Louvain was J. Moeller, a Danish convert, who had studied under Niebuhr and Walter at Bonn, and under Boeckh and Hegel at Berlin. The notes of his lectures, published by his son, the present occupant of the same chair, in the 'Traité des Études Historiques,' 1892, enables us to form a fairly adequate conception of what his teaching must have been. Obviously it was comprehensive, systematic, solid, and useful teaching. The 'Conferences sur la synthèse de l'histoire,' with which the work closes, present to us in a general way his views as to the philosophy of history. The definition given of history is one afterwards made popular by Dr Arnold—viz., "the biography of humanity." The two great factors of history are maintained to be Providence and Free Agency; its end is said to be the divine glory; its chief work is represented as consisting in the preparation for, and the conservation of, the Church of the true God. Moeller's philosophy of history is, in the main, a theodicy based on history. He obviously believed that the Church had not been seriously at fault in any controversy or conjuncture; but none of his utterances, so far as published, give evidence of intolerance or fanaticism.

Mgr. Laforet (1823–72), who was for a time Rector of the University of Louvain, wrote an 'Histoire de la Philosophie,' which led up to the conclusion that what philosophy seeks is only to be found in the teaching of the Church; also an elaborate defence of that teaching in its historical and practical as well as speculative relations,—'Les Dogmes Catholiques,' &c., 4 vols.; and a treatise of which the special object is to prove that Christianity has been the chief source of all that is best in European culture and life,—'Études sur la Civilisation Euro-

péenne considérée dans ses rapports avec le Christianisme,' 1852. MM. Dechamps and Lefebre replied to and attacked the 'Études' of Laurent.

The late M. Thonissen (1817–91) was a very liberal and estimable representative of the Catholic School. He was a man of varied knowledge, who occupied himself much with history, and was especially distinguished as a jurist. He held during forty years the Chair of Criminal Law at Louvain, and was in 1844 Minister of the Interior and of Public Instruction. His interest in social questions led him to a serious study of Socialism, and in 1850 he published a critical account of the system in his 'Socialisme et ses promesses' (2 vols.), and somewhat later a history of it,—'Le Socialisme depuis l'antiquité jusqu'à la constitution française de 1852' (2 vols., 1852). The most valuable of his works is generally admitted to be his 'History of Criminal Law among ancient peoples.' It displays extensive research, sound judgment, and a humane and generous spirit. It has very considerable philosophical interest, and it has been much commended by those who have made a special study of its subject.

The question of progress was submitted by Thonissen to a special examination in his 'Considérations sur la Théorie du Progrès indéfini dans ses rapports avec l'histoire de la civilisation et les dogmes du Christianisme.'[1] The treatise is not marked by originality or profundity, but it is learned and judicious. It is mainly a sketch of the course and a history of the doctrine of progress; but the author has always in view the refutation of those who represent progress as necessary and unlimited,—Schelling, Hegel, Leroux, Reynaud, Laurent, and especially Pelletan, whom he regards as the most brilliant and persuasive advocate of the theory which he combats. He rejects the opinion that man's primitive condition was one of barbarism, simply on the ground that it is contrary to Scripture and tradition. He points out the weaknesses in the civilisations of India, Egypt, Greece, and Rome, and cites express or implied denials of progress made by their

[1] First published in 'Mémoires de la Acad. Roy. dė Belgique,' t. x., 1859, and afterwards as a separate volume in 1867.

chief thinkers. He refers all that is true in the theory of progress to the first preaching of the Gospel, and traces the development of the theory in the middle age and in modern times. He admits that during the historical period progress has been on the whole continuous as a matter of fact, although not of necessity. God wills it; and it is a law of history. There is no incompatibility, he maintains, between Christianity and progress. Those who affirm that there is, on the ground that Christianity teaches immutable dogmas, themselves profess, he reminds them, immutable principles. The real question is, Are the dogmas of Christianity in their own nature inconsistent with progress? This question he answers in the negative, and represents the views of rationalists to the contrary as mere prejudices, due to ignorance of what the spirit and teaching of Christianity actually are.

The socialists of Belgium have taken their historical philosophy for the most part from the founders of French socialism and the leaders of German socialism. The historical theories of the former I have already described; those of the latter will be examined in the next volume. The only Belgian socialist to whom it is necessary here to refer is, I think, Baron de Colins (1783-1859), the originator of a form of collectivism called by his disciples "rational socialism." Considered simply as a socialist, the author of a scheme of comprehensive and detailed social reorganisation, he must be acknowledged to rank among the most ingenious and perspicacious of the class. But he has little claim to notice in any other connection. What he propounded as his philosophy centres in such dogmas as that there is no personal God, no other God than the universal, impersonal Reason; that men possess, however, "immaterial sensibilities" or "souls" which are eternal, and pass through endless series of lives in other worlds; that these souls carry with them into each new life original sin and original merit; that the lower animals are insentient automata, &c. His historical philosophy is not of a kind which it would be justifiable to present otherwise than briefly. I shall content myself with quoting the summary account of it given by M. de Laveleye:—

"At the first, the supremacy of brute force is established: the father of the family rules, the strongest of the tribe commands. But in a tolerably large community, this kind of supremacy can never long endure, for he who is at one time the strongest cannot always remain such. What does he do, then? In order to continue master, he converts, as Rousseau says, his strength into a right, and obedience to him into a duty. With this object in view, he asserts that there exists an anthropomorphic almighty being, called God; that God has revealed rules of action, and has appointed him the infallible lawgiver and interpreter of this revelation; that God has endowed every man with an immortal soul; and, finally, that man will be rewarded or punished in a future life, according as he has or has not regulated his conduct by the revealed law.

"It is not enough, however, for the legislator to assert these dogmas; he must further preserve them from examination, and this is done by maintaining ignorance and repressing thought. Theocratic sovereignty, or the divine right of kings, is thus established, and a feudal aristocracy arises. This is the historic period called by Rational Socialism 'the period of social ignorance and of compressibility of examination.'

"After a longer or shorter interval, in consequence of the growth of intelligence, the discoveries thereby made, and the increasing facility of communication between nations, it becomes impossible to repress all examination entirely. Then the superhuman basis of society is disputed, and its authority falls to the ground. The divine right of kings loses its theocratic mask, and the government is transformed into a mere supremacy of force—that is to say, of the majority of the people. Aristocratic society becomes *bourgeois*, and enters upon the historic period of 'ignorance and incompressibility of examination.'

"Society, then, becomes profoundly agitated and disorganised. The principles which used to insure the obedience of the masses lose their sway. Everything is examined, and scepticism prevails. This unfettered examination ends in the denial of all supernatural sanctions, of the personality of the Deity, and of the immortality of the soul (to mention only these points), and leads to the affirmation of materialism. Then, personal interest becomes a stronger force, with an ever-increasing number of individuals than ideas of order and of devotion to principle, and a situation is brought about thus defined by Colins: 'An epoch of social ignorance, in which immorality increases in proportion to the growth of intelligence.'

"As pauperism simultaneously increases in the same proportions, it follows that the *bourgeois* form of society cannot last. In one way or another it soon falls to pieces, and the supremacy of divine right is restored, until a new revolution ushers in once more the triumph of the *bourgeoisie*. Society cannot escape from this vicious

circle in which it has revolved from the first, until, as the result of the invention and development of the press, and of the absolute impossibility of restricting the examination of old beliefs consequent thereon, all reversion to the theocratic form of government has become radically impossible. When that time comes, humanity must either perish in anarchy, or organise itself conformably to scientific reason. It is then that humanity will enter on the last period of its historical development, the period of 'knowledge,' which will endure as long as the human race can exist on the globe. According to Colins, then, a theocratic *régime* is order founded on despotism, a democratic *régime* is liberty engendering anarchy, while the rational or 'logocratic' *régime* would secure, at the same time, both liberty and order.

Hereafter, according to the Belgian socialist, society will be definitively organised as follows: All men being by right equal, they ought all to be placed in the same position with regard to labour. Man is free, and his labour should be free also. To effect this, matter should be subordinated to intelligence, labour should own both land and capital, and wages would be at a maximum. All men are brothers, for they have a common origin; hence, if any are unable to provide for themselves, society should take care of them. In the intellectual world there should be a social distribution of knowledge to all, and in the material world a social appropriation of the land and of a large portion of the wealth acquired by past generations, and transformed into capital."[1]

In M. Quetelet (1796–1874) Belgium had the most renowned statistician of his time. He has unquestionably done more than any one else to render statistics auxiliary to historical science. He was the first to reveal how wonderful in their comprehensiveness and definiteness are the regularities which prevail among moral and social phenomena. These regularities themselves, the real discoveries of his laborious and brilliant researches, are now universally acknowledged, and are too well known to require to be stated here. But as regards the precise interpretation to be put on them, the place to be assigned them in historical philosophy, their compatibility or incompatibility with free will, and their right to be regarded or not as properly laws, there is great room for difference and variety of opinion. On these points Quetelet can only be credited with raising questions which will come before us in

[1] Socialism of To-day, pp. 249, 250.

connection with German historical thought after they had been under searching discussion, and when they can be more fully and conveniently considered by us.[1]

A Belgian physicist, Captain Brück, who devoted himself specially to the study of magnetism, believed that he had found the key of history in his favourite science. In a work entitled 'L'humanité, son développement, et sa durée,' he attempts to establish a parallelism between magnetical and historical periods, which, in his opinion, reveals the law of history. An exclusively historical investigation proves, he maintains, that there has been a continuous succession of peoples on the earth throughout historical time, and that each of them has exercised during a certain period a maximum of action, and then yielded up the supremacy to another. Each of these chief peoples gives its character to an historical period. Hence the world's great historical periods have been—1. the Assyrian; 2. the Egyptian; 3. the Jewish-Phœnician; 4. the Greek; 5. the Roman; 6. the Frankish; 7. the Catholic; and 8. the French. Each of the peoples corresponding to these periods successively and gradually asserted itself, passed through a phase of intellectual or material maximum of power, and then grew feeble in transmitting its acquisitions to its successor. The period of supremacy of each dominant people has hitherto, according to Brück, been constant, the same for all, lasting about five centuries, a half of the people's entire life. Tables are given designed to show that the principal life-epochs of the peoples which have reappeared in succession on our continent —those of their foundation, organisation, apogee, and end or renewal—reproduce themselves periodically at a distance of a little more than five centuries. But purely physical investigation, Brück maintains, shows, besides an extremely slow magnetic displacement from East to West, due to the precession

[1] The most important of Quetelet's sociological works are, 'Sur l'Homme et le développement de ses facultés,' 2 tom., 1835; 'Lettres sur la théorie des probabilités,' 1846; "La Statistique Morale" in 'Mém. de l'Acad. Roy. de Belgique,' t. xxi., 1848; 'Du Système Sociale,' 1848; and 'De la Statistique considerée sous le rapport du physique, de la morale, et d'intelligence de l'homme,' 1860. As regards Quetelet himself, see the *Notice* by Ed. Mailly in the *Annuaire* of the Acad. Roy. de Belgique for 1875.

of the equinoxes, a quinquasecular movement, fixed by him at 516 years. And these two periods, he argues, have their analogues in the slow displacement of the centre of civilisation from East to West, and especially in the quinquasecular evolution found by analysis to be characteristic of the course of history itself.[1]

The learned Bollandist, Father Charles de Smedt, S.J. (1794-1887), did honour to his country and his order by his historical labours. He began his literary career with a History of Belgium, 1821, and afterwards edited the important 'Corpus Chronicorum Flandriæ.' He is the author of a justly famed 'Introduction to Ecclesiastical History,'[2] almost indispensable to students of that branch of historical knowledge. It indicates, classifies, and appreciates the sources, auxiliaries, and literature, with great learning and sound judgment. I mention Father de Smedt here, however, especially on account of his 'Principes de la Critique Historique,' published in 1883, and composed, for the most part, of articles which had appeared in a French religious periodical in 1869 and 1870. It is one of the best books on its subject; attractive in style; manifestly inspired by a conscientious and liberal spirit; and the fruit of thorough learning and of long experience. In a manner always sensible and useful it treats of the utility of studying the rules of criticism, of the dispositions required in the critic, of the nature of historical certainty, of the authenticity, interpretation, and authority of the texts, of oral and popular tradition, of the negative argument, of conjecture, of unwritten testimony, and of arguments *a priori*. Besides, it touches on a number of particular disputed points luminously, although briefly. At the same time, it is far from adequate to its sub-

[1] Any knowledge which I possess of Captain Brück and his treatise has been derived entirely from the 'History of the Physical and Mathematical Sciences in Belgium,' by MM. Ch. and E. Lagrange—see 'Cinquante Ans de Liberté,' t. 11, pp. 171-195. My failure to procure his work is probably not much to be regretted. I could certainly not have formed an intelligent opinion regarding his magnetic periods of 516 years, and would have been most sceptical as to his historical periods of 518 years. MM. Lagrange speak in the highest terms of the scientific genius and the self-sacrificing labours of Captain Brück.

[2] Introductio generalis ad historiam ecclesiasticam critice tractandam. Gandavi, 1876.

ject or sufficient for the wants of students. It is in no way a systematic treatise, and does not at all penetrate into the psychology or even the logic of historical processes. It is only just to describe it as still one of the best books on the principles of historical criticism; but it is little to the credit of historians that we should require or be able so to describe it.[1]

II.

French-speaking Switzerland is not, as some suppose, intellectually a mere province of France. It has a character of its own; one which has been developed under peculiar political conditions, and profoundly modified by the action of religion. It lies open, however, to all French influences; and what is said and done at Paris is immediately known and felt at Geneva and Lausanne. At the same time it readily receives and assimilates German ideas, owing partly to its Protestantism and partly to its close connection with German-speaking Switzerland. As regards literature and science it will bear honourable comparison, relatively to its extent and population, with any other portion of Europe. It is characterised by great intellectual, as well as industrial and commercial activity. It has produced a large number of historians, although none, perhaps, of the highest rank. Among the best-known names are those of Beza, Theodore Agrippa D'Aubigné, Mallet-Dupan, Sismondi, B. Constant, Merle D'Aubigné, De Felice, Chastel, Sayous, Roget, &c. As regards its historical theorists there is not much now to tell. Rousseau, Madame de Staël, and Benjamin Constant, have already been under our notice.[2]

Alexander Vinet (1797-1847) has been the most influential of the Swiss Protestant writers of this century; and deservedly, being the man of most original individuality, of purest genius,

[1] There is an interesting sketch of the life of Father de Smedt by Father de Decker in the *Annuaire* for 1888 of the Royal Academy of Belgium.

[2] M. Virgile Rossel's 'Histoire Littéraire de la Suisse Romande des origines à nos jours,' 2 tom., 1889, seems, so far as I can judge, to fulfil its promise of presenting "a faithful and complete picture of the intellectual life of all the French-speaking cantons from its commencement to the present time."

of intensest conviction, of most striking and searching eloquence. He has nowhere specially treated of the philosophy of history, but he has often touched upon it; and M. Astié has diligently collected the thoughts expressed on these occasions, and skilfully composed of them a chapter of a book widely known to English readers as Vinet's 'Outlines of Philosophy.' From that chapter I shall make a few quotations.

"History in its highest signification is but the manifestation of the idea of progress, whether we refer that progress to the nature of things and the course of time, or whether we seek it in what Bossuet calls *the development of religion,* or lastly, whether we view it as a result of these two causes combined. In all these cases, progress can only be the advance of the intelligent world towards *truth,* which exclusively and infallibly contains *goodness.* If the law of progress do not exist, there is no meaning in history, nor in the world either, and each alike is only fit to be thrown aside as mere rubbish."

"There is one sense in which truth knows no laws except its own, is never overcome, never retarded, and always triumphs. It always realises itself, either in the free submission of the moral being or in his chastisement. The believing and the unbelieving, the saints and the ungodly, equally do it honour. Error, which combats it, affords it at the same time, at its own cost, a striking confirmation; it is its natural counter-proof."

"The fall of heavy bodies is not subject to more rigorous laws than the course of the idea in the human mind and in society. A principle bears all its consequences within itself, as a plant does all its posterity. Men may choose the time to agitate a question; they may defer proposing it; but, once proposed, they cannot prevent the questions it contains proposing themselves one after the other. . . . Truth and necessity only make one, and the logic of the ideas lay beforehand in the facts. God has granted us no nobler spectacle than that of times when these two logics reunite. Nothing is so indefatigable, obstinate, and powerful, as a principle. It gradually brings all thoughts into captivity to its obedience; and even before it has subjected thoughts, it has subjected facts. As everything is connected in a true system, as the whole truth is included in each particular truth, one point gained, the whole is gained."

"If in the destinies of humanity as a whole, or even of a single nation, the weight of individualities is but little felt; if in so vast a calculation their value is hardly appreciable; they do for all that tell in the limits of a given century; and the historians of the fatalist school, who are very right in an extended horizon only to take count of general causes, and to refer results immediately to *laws,* are wrong

when they transport their system within narrower bounds. Nothing prevents them, or rather nothing excuses them from assigning to human liberty, to diversity of character, and to special providence, a part, and a considerable part too, in the production of events. Let them abstract these on a less limited scale; they may do so without endangering the dogma of divine liberty, while in dealing with the annals of one or of a few centuries, their method compromises at one blow, together with the liberty of man, the liberty of God."

"It seems written in the book of national destiny that, in the advance of social facts, thought and action shall never move with equal step; thought invariably limps breathlessly after action, or action after thought—each is alternately too slow or too precipitate. This incurable disease of society, springing as it does from an incurable disease of human nature, is a fertile principle of political disturbances."

"Although a social truth lies at the bottom of all struggles, yet this truth, under its general and absolute form, only manifests itself to the generation that comes when the struggle is over. Posterity alone knows why the conflict took place, and would tell it, were that possible, to those by whom the conflict was carried on; for no theory has appeared in the world anterior to facts; it is the facts that have engendered the theory: thus it is that all social truths, created one by one both by necessity and opportunity, have come down to us; thus it is that our children will know better than we what it was we really aimed at. It is only God who knows beforehand what He wills and what He does."

"Influenced by the recollections of a thousand generous *revolts* which have asserted in our world the rights of God over the pretensions of men, the rights of truth over the pretensions of error, in short those of virtue over vice, I have said, and I still say, that it is from revolt to revolt that societies go on to perfection, that justice reigns, and truth flourishes. Yet, although history teaches that almost all the great questions that have agitated society have had a violent solution, it is the duty of *social* man to start from an opposite hope, to spare society too sudden transformations, and to smooth the incline by which humanity advances to new destinies."

"All progress leads to discontent; it is not misery that plants the standard of revolutions. What! is progress, then, to be always a subject of alarm? Will it always rouse some confused idea of crime and impiety? Will it always find a great number of the most honourable members of society distrustful of and almost in league against it? Yes; so long as the progress of the human heart —that heart which, according to Scripture, is desperately wicked, and whose wickedness taints all things—does not correspond with the progress of laws, arts, and even morals. Humanity seems to

forget that the first inventions, the first progress, occurred in the family of Cain."

"Nothing in God's eyes is progress in humanity except what restores in humanity the image of God. The Christian, too, who sees all with God's eyes, in God's light, gives the name of progress to nothing else; for society, being neither external to humanity nor to the plan of God, must tend towards the same end to which man is summoned to aim: we may very easily deduce from this that equality is, in the eyes of the Christian, neither the whole of progress, nor even an essential part of the true progress, but at most (and this remains to be discussed) one of the consequences, or one of the signs of true progress. For a man who has become the equal of all other men is not for that reason more like to God; and a society where the most absolute equality was established would not by that alone correspond any better with the divine idea."

M. Charles Secrétan felt the influence of Vinet, but he also, when a student at Munich, came under the spell of Schelling; and his chief work, 'La Philosophie de la Liberté,' reminds us on every page of the religious earnestness of the former, and of the speculative venturesomeness of the latter. The system expounded in it, however, is based on Kant's doctrine of the supremacy of the practical reason. Its central idea is that of Absolute Liberty. He protests against its being described as an *a priori* metaphysical deduction; but it is, at least, a boldly constructive philosophy, very ambitious in its aim, and all-comprehensive in its range,—"a synthesis," as its author himself avers, "of theism and pantheism, of monism and of monadology, of dogmatism and of criticism, of history and of reason, under the sovereign direction of the moral idea." Its themes are God, nature, and man; and it comprehends a kind of philosophy of history, which claims to be essentially Christian, inasmuch as it discovers in Christianity the only true satisfaction, and the only adequate explanation of the condition and course of human affairs.

In the exposition of his historical doctrine, as of his system in general, M. Secrétan displays a vigorous and original intelligence, and gives expression to many fine and striking thoughts. But the doctrine itself need not detain us. It consists not of properly historical theses, but of essentially theological hypotheses, mostly incapable either of rational proof or

of inductive verification. It contains very disputable views regarding God conceived of as absolute and infinite liberty; the origination of the universe and of humanity in a perfect ideal unity; the disruption of that unity into an indefinite number of individualities; a primordial fall, or original sin, before time and development, anterior to nature, exterior to history, and the source alike of physical and of moral evil; the struggling and suffering of the Restorative Will of God in conflict with matter; the tending of the humanity-species to incarnation; the Word becoming an individual in Christ, expiating sin, and sanctifying the race; the return of mankind to the absolute unity through the Church; and similar themes.

In M. Secrétan's latest book, 'Mon Utopie,' 1892, he has delineated his ideal of the future. It is one which includes the solution of the economic problem by the collectivisation of property in land; of the social question by the complete enfranchisement of women, the equalisation of the sexes; and of the religious problem by the severance of religion from theology, the organisation of a Church without dogma or confession.

Another pupil of Vinet was J. P. Trottet (1818-62). He studied four years in Germany, and was for a long time pastor at Stockholm, and for a shorter period at the Hague. He was warmly religious, while free and vague as regards his theology. His chief work, 'Le Génie des Civilisations,' 2 vols., appeared in 1862, shortly before his death. It treats only of antiquity; bears marks of having been brought hurriedly to a close; and gives no indications of how it was intended to be worked out. It testifies to wide reading and prolonged reflection, but is often more ingenious than clear or convincing. Its arrangement is rather loose: for example, the note regarding "the first cause of the formation of races" at the end of the first volume, and the last chapter of the second volume as to "the natural relations between human civilisations and the configuration of the places which have served as their theatre," should have been included in the introduction. It proceeds on the conviction that the entire development of each people springs from its distinctive spiritual principle, and is only to be understood

through a study of its religion; that the destinies of nations are determined by their modes of representing and revering the Divine. It treats especially of the constitutive period of each of the societies brought under consideration. The patriarchal family, the patriarchal tribe, patriarchal humanity as represented by China, the city-empires of Babylon, Nineveh, and Carthage, the sacerdotal realm of India, the pagan monarchies of Egypt and Iran, the ancient republics of Greece and Rome, and the Jewish theocracy, are successively passed in review, with the purpose of showing that the whole history of humanity has been the necessary preparation for Christianity; that the mythological religions were stages of education suited to the wants of the human mind at each epoch of its development; that Christian consciousness is the final and perfect form of humanitarian consciousness. But the conclusion is not fully reached. The work is a fragment, and we are not enabled to form any satisfactory conception of the whole in which it was meant to be included.

The late M. Frederick de Rougemont (1807-76) of Neuchâtel was a layman, but of far more rigid orthodoxy than Vinet or Trottet; a most vigorous theological polemic; a man widely acquainted with science, of immense learning, of indefatigable activity, of unswerving conscientiousness, and of unfaltering courage. He never hesitated to call to strict account the most eminent of his fellow-countrymen, such as Agassiz, Vinet, and M. de Gasparin, when they seemed to him to fall into heresies. His absolute faith in the inerrancy of the Scriptures was accompanied by a faith almost as strong in the inerrancy of his own deductions from them. At one period of his life he was a disciple of Hegel, and although he abandoned Hegelianism when, to use his own words, "he took his seat at the feet of Christ," he retained to the last some Hegelian peculiarities of thought and speech. He regarded Germany as "his intellectual fatherland."

Among Rougemont's numerous works are two very erudite treatises—the one intended to establish his views regarding "the primitive people,"[1] and the other to prove his hypothesis

[1] Le Peuple Primitif, sa religion, son histoire, et sa civilisation, 3 vols., 1885-87.

of the Semitic origin of Western civilisation.[1] With these are closely connected 'Les Deux Cités—La Philosophie de l'Histoire aux différents âges de l'Humanité,' 2 tom., 1874.[2] This last is much the more important. The second volume is especially valuable. The account which it gives of the doctrine of historical theorists from the Renaissance to our own day is the fruit of enormous and conscientious reading. So far as the historical narrative is concerned, there is much that is excellent in the first volume also, although there is likewise a good deal that is irrelevant or erroneous. But while 'Les Deux Cités' is a very remarkable and meritorious work, it has at least two serious defects.

The first obtrudes itself on us in almost every page. M. Rougemont is far from being as considerate and fair in judging of the theories and systems which he brings before us as he is in simply presenting them. The secret of this fact is not only an open one, but one which he has taken care that we shall learn from himself. In bringing his work to a close, he tells us that "he has weighed the historical philosophers of all times in the balance of the sanctuary, and put on his left hand those who are light; that no one has a right to protest against this balance, seeing that every one has his own; and that the only difference between himself and the philosophers is that their balances are of earthly fabrication, and have been adopted without due consideration, whereas his is that of Christ, and has been carefully selected." There may be Helvetian candour in this declaration, but there is neither modesty nor reasonableness in it. Criticism conducted on such a plan is a continuous *petitio principii* in the critic's own favour. Without any disrespect to "the balance of the sanctuary," its fitness for weighing philosophical theories and historical generalisations may be doubted. What other balance for weighing these things can there be than reason taking fair and full account of all the relevant facts? There is no other instrument, no other method, of dealing justly with the opinions and systems

[1] L'Âge du bronze, ou les Sémites en Occident, 1866.

[2] It was published a month or two later than my 'Philosophy of History in France and Germany.'

either of those "deists, pantheists, materialists, positivists, and sceptics," whom Rougemont so dictatorially waives to the left, or of those "believing theologians" to whom, as arbitrarily, he assigns a place of honour on his right. Then, is it really "the balance of the sanctuary" which he employs? That is very doubtful. What he certainly does employ as a balance is just his own historical philosophy. True, he fathers that philosophy on the prophets Isaiah, Ezekiel, Nahum, and Daniel, and on the apostles St Paul and St John; but, then, he founds the claim on the most arbitrary and improbable interpretations of their writings. His so-called "balance of the sanctuary" is largely of his own fabrication; it is his own private theory of history.

The unsatisfactoriness of that theory is the second of the two defects referred to as lessening the value of 'Les Deux Cités.' It consists to a large extent of hypotheses associated with rather than founded on the Bible, and of Biblical doctrines or declarations misapplied. It is not necessary, I think, to subject it to a critical examination. The following quotation will give some general idea of it, and of the plan of M. de Rougemont's work:—

"Knowing the problems of historiosophy, all the false solutions which reason can give them, and the only true one, that which is taught us in Holy Scripture, we shall exhibit the order of succession of the revelations of God and of the errors of man from age to age. The revelations are three in number: that of God the Creator, Elohim, to the psychical humanity sprung from Adam; that of Jehovah to the Hebrew people born of Sem; that of Jesus Christ to the spiritual humanity which is His issue by faith. The errors are of two opposite natures, and of two epochs separated by thousands of years; the myths of the ancient East and the philosophical systems of the modern West. Between these systems and these historiosophic myths there intervenes in time and space the science of the biology of nations created by the human mind among the Hellenes. The division of our work is thus very simple. The first book has for its subject the traditions which primitive humanity has transmitted to us regarding its origins and the revelations of God. There are there the foundations of historiosophy. The two books which follow comprehend the pagan peoples of the East and the Hebrews. The pagans wander astray among myths which have no value for our science, but which all proceed from, and thereby bear witness to, the

primordial truths of humanity. The most curious of these myths are the cyclical histories of the universe. The Hebrews receive from God a second revelation which confirms the first, and which is summed up in the promise of the Messiah. Then come Greece and Rome, which, while losing sight of the history of humanity; discover the formulæ of the succession of governments in the different ages of their republican cities. The following books, which comprise the historiosophy of the Christian world, show us: first, Jesus Christ and His apostles completing the divine revelations; then on one side, the believing thinkers explaining by the great principles of the faith, and by the prophecies the history of humanity; and on another side, the rationalistic philosophers striving in vain to comprehend its course and plan, and, by the very vanity of their efforts, as well as by their studies in historical biology, coming slowly to confess that the revealed historiosophy is the most rational of philosophies. Primitive humanity is the thesis; Israel of the race of Sem and the Japhetic Hellenes form the antithesis of the divine revelations and of human science; the Christian world is called to accomplish or at least to prepare for the definitive synthesis of faith and of reason."[1]

The work of Cæsar Malan, entitled 'Les Grands Traits de l'Histoire religieuse de l'Humanité,' 1883, will please and interest its readers by its eloquence, its sincerity of tone, and the truth and worth of many of the thoughts and facts which it conveys. But, I imagine, it will find few disposed to accept its formula of historical development, its distribution of historical time. It represents humanity as passing through three stages, or Divine Economies,—the Economy of the presence of God on earth, the Economy of revelation, and the Economy of *palingénesie*, or of the redemption of man and the restoration of the kingdom of God. Thus to force the matter of history into the mould of an antiquated theology is surely imprudent. M. Malan's work is derived in a considerable measure from the 'Humanität und Christenthum' of the Danish theologian, Dr Scharling, which will come before us in our next volume.

Secrétan, Rougemont, and Malan seem to me to have one fault in common, that of fancying themselves to know a great deal more about the beginning and end of history than they really do, or even than it has been given to man in his present

[1] Pp. 32, 33.

state to know. All three might have sat with advantage at the feet of that gifted Swiss maiden—Mlle. Alice de Chambrier—whose thoughts incessantly tended to the immortality to which she was so early called away, and who felt so deeply that the life of man on earth is but a slender gleam of light between immensities of darkness.

> " Où donc la vie humaine a-t-elle pris sa source ?
> Vers quel but inconnu son cours est-il poussé ?
> Vers d'autres univers portons-nous notre course ?
> L'avenir sera-t-il l'image du passé ?
>
> Mystère de la vie, ô grand pourquoi des choses !
> Arche immense d'un pont sur les siècles construit,
> Et dont les deux piliers, les effets et les causes,
> Plongent, l'un dans le vague et l'autre dans la nuit ! "

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